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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

JULY 1902.

*The Disentanglers.*¹

X.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE FAIR AMERICAN.

I. The Prize of a Lady's Hand.

'YES, I guess that Pappa *was* reckoned considerable of a crank. A great educational reformer, and a progressive Democratic stalwart, *that* is the kind of hair-pin Pappa was! But it is awkward for me, some.'

These remarks, though of an obsolete and exaggerated transatlantic idiom, were murmured in the softest of tones, in the most English of silken accents, by the most beautiful of young ladies. She occupied the client's chair in Merton's office, and, as she sat there and smiled, Merton acknowledged to himself that he had never met a client so charming and so perplexing.

Miss McCabe had been educated, as Merton knew, at an aristocratic Irish convent in Paris, a sanctuary of old names and old creeds. This was the plan of her late father (spoken of by her as Pappa), an educational reformer of eccentric ideas, who, though of ancient (indeed royal) Irish descent, was of American birth. The young lady had thus acquired abroad, much against her will, that kind of English accent which some of her countrywomen reckon 'affected.' But her intense patriotism had induced her to study in the works of American humourists, and to

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reproduce in her discourse, the flowers of speech of which a specimen has been presented. The national accent was beyond her, but at least she could be true to what she (erroneously) believed to be the national idiom.

'Your case is peculiar,' said Merton thoughtfully, 'and scarcely within our province. As a rule our clients are the parents, guardians, or children of persons entangled in undesirable engagements. But you, I understand, are dissatisfied with the matrimonial conditions imposed by the will of the late Mr. McCabe?'

'I want to take my own pick out of the crowd——' said Miss McCabe.

'I can readily understand,' said Merton bowing, 'that the throng of wooers is enormous,' and he vaguely thought of Penelope.

'The scheme will be popular. It will hit our people right where they live,' said Miss McCabe, not appropriating the compliment. 'You see, Pappa struck ile early, and struck it often. He was what our Howells calls a "multimillionaire," and I'm his only daughter. Pappa loved *me*, but he loved the people better. Guess Pappa was not mean, not worth a cent. He was a white man!'

Miss McCabe, with a glow of lovely enthusiasm, contemplated the unprecedented whiteness of the paternal character.

'"What the people want," Pappa used to say, "is education. They want it short, and they want it striking." That was why he laid out five millions on his celebrated Museum of Freaks, with a staff of competent professors and lecturers. "The McCabe Museum of Natural Varieties, lectures and all, is open gratuitously to the citizens of our Republic, and to intelligent foreigners." That was how Pappa put it. I say that he dead-headed creation!'

'Truly Republican munificence,' said Merton, 'worthy of your great country.'

'Well, I should smile,' said Miss McCabe.

'But—excuse my insular ignorance—I do not exactly understand how a museum of freaks, admirably organised as no doubt it is, contributes to the cause of popular education.'

'You have museums even in London?' asked Miss McCabe.

Merton assented.

'Are they not educational?'

The British Museum is mainly used by the children of the

poor, as a place where they play a kind of subdued hide-and seek,' said Merton.

'That's because they are not interested in tinned Egyptian corpses and broken Greek statuary ware,' answered the fair Republican. 'Now, Mr. Merton, did you ever see or hear of a popular museum—a museum that the People would give its cents to see?'

'I have heard of Mr. Barnum's museum,' said Merton.

'That's the idea: it is right there,' said Miss McCabe. 'But old man Barnum was not scientific. He saw what our people wanted, but he did not see, Pappa said, how to educate them through their natural instincts. Barnum's mermaid was not genuine business. It confused the popular mind, and fostered superstition—and got found out. The result was scepticism, both religious and scientific. Now, Pappa used to argue, the lives of our citizens are monotonous. They see yellow dogs, say, but each yellow dog has only one tail. They see men and women, but almost all of them have only one head; and even a hand with six fingers is not common. This is why the popular mind runs into grooves. This causes what they call "the dead level of democracy." Even our men of genius, Pappa allowed (for he was a very fair-minded man), do not go ahead of the European ticket, but rather the reverse. Your Tennyson has the inner tracks of our Longfellow: your Thackeray gives our Bertha Runkle his dust. The papers called Pappa unpatriotic, and a bad American. But he was *not*: he was a white man. When he saw his country's faults he put his finger on them, right there, and tried to cure them.'

'A noble policy,' murmured Merton.

Miss McCabe was really so pretty and unusual that he did not care how long she was in coming to the point.

'Well, Pappa argued that there was more genius, or had been since the Declaration of Independence, even in England, than in the States. "And why?" he asked. "Why, because they have more *variety* in England. Things are not all on one level there——"'

'Our dogs have only one tail apiece,' said Merton, 'in spite of the proverb "*as proud as a dog with two tails*"; and a plurality of heads is unusual even among British subjects.'

'Yes,' answered Miss McCabe, 'but you have varieties among yourselves. You have a King and a Queen; and your peerage is rich in differentiated species. A Baronet is not a Marquis, nor is a Duke an Earl.'

'He may be both,' said Merton, but Miss McCabe continued to expose the paternal philosophy.

'Now, Pappa would not hear of aristocratic distinctions in our country. He was a Hail Columbia man, on the Democratic ticket. But *something* is wanted, he said, to get us out of grooves, and break the monotony. That something, said Pappa, Nature has mercifully provided in Freaks. The citizens feel this, unconsciously: that's why they spend their money at Barnum's. But Barnum was not scientific, and Barnum was not straight about his mermaid. So Pappa founded his Museum of Natural Varieties, all of them honest Injun. Here the lecturers show off the freaks, and explain how Nature works them, and how she can always see them and go one better. We have the biggest gold nugget and the weeniest cunning least gold nugget; the biggest diamond and the smallest diamond; the tallest man and the smallest man; the whitest negro and the yellowest red man in the world. We have the most eccentric beasts, and the queerest fishes, and everything is explained by lecturers of world-wide reputation, on the principles of evolution, as copyrighted by our Asa Gray and our Agassiz. *That* is what Pappa called popular education, and it hits our citizens right where they live.'

Miss McCabe paused, in a flush of filial and patriotic enthusiasm. Merton inwardly thought that among the queerest fishes the late Mr. McCabe must have been pre-eminent. But what he said was, 'The scheme is most original. Our educationists (to employ a term which they do not disdain), such as Mr. Herbert Spencer, Sir Joshua Fitch, and others, have thought out nothing like this. Our capitalists never endow education on this more than imperial scale.'

'Guess they are scaly varmints!' interposed Miss McCabe.

Merton bowed his acquiescence in the sentiment.

'But,' he went on, 'I still do not quite understand how your own prospects in life are affected by Mr. McCabe's most original and, I hope, promising experiment?'

'Pappa loved me, but he loved his country better, and taught me to adore her, and be ready for any sacrifice.' Miss McCabe looked straight at Merton, like an Iphigenia blended with a Joan of Arc.

'I do sincerely trust that no sacrifice is necessary,' said Merton. 'The circumstances do not call for so—unexampled a victim.'

'I am to be Lady Principal of the museum when I come to

the age of twenty-five: that is, in six years,' said Miss McCabe proudly. 'You don't call *that* a sacrifice?'

Merton wanted to say that the most magnificent of natural varieties would only be in its proper place. But the *man of business* and the manager of a great and beneficent association overcame the mere amateur of beauty, and he only said that the position of Lady Principal was worthy of the ambition of a patriot and a friend of the species.

'Well, I reckon! But a clause in Pappa's will is awkward for me, some. It is about my marriage,' said Miss McCabe bravely.

Merton assumed an air of grave interest.

'Pappa left it in his will that I was to marry the man (under the age of five-and-thirty, and of unimpeachable character and education) who should discover, and add to the museum, the most original and unheard-of natural variety, whether found in the Old or the New World.'

Merton could scarcely credit the report of his ears.

'Would you oblige me by repeating that statement?' he said; and Miss McCabe repeated it in identical terms, obviously quoting textually from the will.

'Now I understand your unhappy position,' said Merton, thoroughly agreeing with the transatlantic critics who had pronounced the late Mr. McCabe 'considerable of a crank.' 'But this is far too serious a matter for me—for our Association. I am no legist, but I am convinced that, at least British, and I doubt not American, law would promptly annul a testatory clause so utterly unreasonable and unprecedented.'

'Unreasonable!' exclaimed Miss McCabe, rising to her feet with eyes of flame, 'I am my father's daughter, and his wish is my law, whatever the laws that men make may say.'

Her affectation of slang had fallen off; she was absolutely natural now, and entirely in earnest.

Merton rose also.

'One moment,' he said. 'It would be impertinence in me to express my admiration of you—of what you say. As the question is not a legal one (in such I am no fit adviser) I shall think myself honoured if you will permit me to be of any service in the circumstances. They are less unprecedented than I hastily supposed. History records many examples of fathers, even of royal rank, who have attached similar conditions to the disposal of their daughters' hands.'

Merton was thinking of the kings in the treatises of Monsieur

Charles Perrault, Madame d'Aulnoy, and other historians of Fairy-land; of monarchs who give their daughters to the bold adventurers that bring the smallest dog, or the singing rose, or the horse magical.

'What you really want, I think,' he went on, as Miss McCabe resumed her seat, 'is to have your choice, as you said, among the competitors?'

'Yes,' replied the fair American, 'that is only natural.'

'But then,' said Merton, 'much depends on who decides as to the merits of the competitors. With whom does the decision rest?'

'With the people.'

'With the people?'

'Yes, with the popular vote, as expressed through the newspaper that my father founded—*The Yellow Flag*. The public is to see the exhibits, the new varieties of nature, and the majority of votes is to carry the day. "Trust the people!" that was Pappa's word.'

'Then anyone who chooses, of the age, character, and education stipulated under the clause in the will, may go and bring in whatever variety of nature he pleases and take his chance?'

'That is it all the time,' said the client. 'There is a trust, and the trustees, friends of Pappa's, decide on the qualifications of the young men who enter for the competition. If the trustees are satisfied they allot money for expenses out of the exploration fund, so that nobody may be stopped because he is poor.'

'There will be an enormous throng of competitors in these conditions—and with such a prize,' Merton could not help adding.

'I reckon the trustees are middling particular. They'll weed them out.'

'Is there any restriction on the nationality of the competitors?' asked Merton, on whom an idea was dawning.

'Only members of the English speaking races need apply,' said Miss McCabe. 'Pappa took no stock in Spaniards or Turks.'

'The voters will be prejudiced in favour of their own fellow citizens?' asked Merton. 'That is only natural.'

'Trust the people,' said Miss McCabe. 'The whole thing is to be kept as dark as a blind coloured person hunting in a dark cellar for a black cat that is not there.'

'A truly Miltonic illustration,' said Merton.

'The advertisement for competitors will be carefully worded, so as to attract only young men of science. The young men are

not to be told about *me*: the prize is in dollars, "with other advantages to be later specified." The varieties found are to be conveyed to a port abroad, not yet named, and shipped for New York in a steamer belonging to the McCabe Trust.'

'Then am I to understand that the conditions affecting your marriage are still an entire secret?'

'That is so,' said Miss McCabe, 'and I guess from what the marchioness told me, your reference, that you can keep a secret.'

'To keep secrets is the very essential of my vocation,' said Merton.

But *this* secret, as will be seen, he did not absolutely keep.

'The arrangements,' he added, 'are most judicious.'

'Guess Pappa was 'cute,' said Miss McCabe, relapsing into her adopted mannerisms.

'I think I now understand the case in all its bearings,' Merton went on. 'I shall give it my serious consideration. Perhaps I had better say no more at present, but think over the matter. You remain in town for the season?'

'Guess we've staked out a claim in Berkeley Square,' said Miss McCabe, 'an agreeable location.' She mentioned the number of the house.

'Then we are likely to meet now and then,' said Merton, 'and I trust that I may be permitted to wait on you occasionally.'

Miss McCabe graciously assented; her chaperon, Lady Rathcoffey, was summoned by her from the inner chamber and the society of Miss Blossom, the typewriter; the pair drove away, and Merton was left to his own reflections.

'I do not know what can be done for her,' he thought, 'except to see that there is at least one eligible man, a gentleman, among the crowd of competitors, and that he is a likely man to win the beautiful prize. And that man is Bude, by Jove, if he wants to win it.'

The Earl of Bude, whose name at once occurred to Merton, was a remarkable personage. The world knew him as rich, handsome, happy, and a mighty hunter of big game. They knew not the mysterious grief that for years had gnawed at his heart. Why did not Bude marry? No woman could say. The world, moreover, knew not, but Merton did, that Lord Bude was the mysterious Mr. Jones Harvey, who contributed the most original papers to the Proceedings of the Geographical and Zoological Societies, and who had conferred many strange beasts on the Gardens of the latter learned institution. The erudite papers

were read, the eccentric animals were conferred, in the name of Mr. Jones Harvey. They came from outlandish addresses in the ends of the earth, but, in the flesh, Jones Harvey had been seen by no man, and his secret had been confided to Merton only, to Logan, and two other school friends. He did good to science by stealth, and blushed at the idea of being a F.R.S. There was no show of science about Bude, and nothing exotic, except the singular circumstance that, however he happened to be dressed, he always wore a ring, or pin, or sleeve links set with very ugly and muddy looking pearls. From these ornaments Lord Bude was inseparable; to chaff about presents from dusky princesses on undiscovered shores he was impervious. Even Merton did not know the cause of his attachment to these ungainly jewels, or the dark memory of mysterious loss with which they were associated.

Merton's first care was to visit the divine Althæa, Mrs. Brown-Smith, and other ladies of his acquaintance. Their cards were deposited at the claim staked out by Miss McCabe in Berkeley Square, and that young lady soon 'went everywhere,' and publicly confessed that she 'was having a real lovely time.' By a little diplomacy Lord Bude was brought acquainted with Miss McCabe. She consented to overlook his possession of a coronet; titles were, to this heroine, not marvels (as to some of her countrywomen and ours), but rather matters of indifference, scarcely even suggesting hostile prejudice. The observers in society, mothers and maids, and the chroniclers of fashion, soon perceived that there was at least a marked *camaraderie* between the *elegant aristocrat*, hitherto indifferent to woman, untouched, as was deemed, by love, and the lovely Child of Freedom. Miss McCabe sat by him while he drove his coach; on the roof of his drag at Lord's; and of his houseboat at Henley, where she fainted when the crew of Johns Hopkins University, U.S., was defeated by a length by Balliol (where Lord Bude had been the favourite pupil of the great Master). Merton remarked these tokens of friendship with approval. If Bude could be induced to enter for the great competition, and if he proved successful, there seemed no reason to suppose that Miss McCabe would be dissatisfied with the People's choice.

Towards the end of the season, and in Bude's smoking-room, about five in the July morning after a ball at Eglintoun House, Merton opened his approaches. He began, cautiously, from talk of moors and forests; he touched on lochs, he mentioned the Highland

traditions of water bulls (which haunt these meres); he spoke of the *Beathach mór Loch Odha*, a legendary animal of immeasurable length. The *Beathach* has twelve feet; he has often been heard crashing through the ice in the nights of winter. These tales the narrator has gleaned from the lips of the Celtic peasantry of Letter Awe.

'I daresay he does break the ice,' said Bude. 'In the matter of cryptic survivals of extinct species I can believe a good deal.'

'The sea serpent?' asked Merton.

'Seen him thrice,' said Bude.

'Then why did not Jones Harvey weigh in with a letter to *Nature*?'

'Jones Harvey has a scientific reputation to look after, and knows he would be laughed at. That's the kind of hairpin *he* is,' said Bude, quoting Miss McCabe. 'By Jove, Merton, that girl——' and he paused.

'Yes, she is pretty,' said Merton.

'Pretty! I have seen the women of the round world—before I went to—well, never mind where, I used to think the Poles the most magnificent, but *she*——'

'Whips creation,' said Merton. 'But I,' he went on, 'am rather more interested in these other extraordinary animals. Do you seriously believe, with your experience, that some extinct species are—not extinct?'

'To be sure I do. The world is wide. But they are very shy. I once stalked a Bunyip, in Central Australia, in a lagoon. The natives said he was there: I watched for a week, squatting in the reeds, and in the grey of the seventh dawn I saw him.'

'Did you shoot?'

'No, I observed him through a field glass first.'

'What is the beggar like?'

'Much like some of the Highland water cattle, as described, but it is his ears they take for horns. Australia has no indigenous horned animal. He is, I should say, about nine feet long, marsupial (he rose breast high), and web-footed. I saw that when he dived. Other white men have seen him—Buckley, the convict, for one, when he lived among the blacks.'

'Buckley was not an accurate observer.'

'Jones Harvey is.'

'Any other queer beasts?'

'Of course, plenty. You have heard of the *Mylodon*, the gigantic Sloth? His bones, skin, and hair were lately found in

a cave in Patagonia, with a lot of his fodder. You can see them at the British Museum in South Kensington. Primitive Patagonian man used the female of the species as a milch-cow. He was a genial friendly kind of brute, accessible to charm of manner and chopped hay. They fed him on that, in a domesticated state.'

'But he is extinct. Hesketh Pritchard went to look for a live *Myiodon*, and did not find him.'

'Did not know where to look,' said Bude.

'But you do?' asked Merton.

'Yes, I think so.'

'Then why don't you bring one over to the Zoo?'

'I may some day.'

'Are there any more survivors of extinct species?'

'Merton, is this an interview? Are you doing Mr. Jones Harvey at home for a picture paper?'

'No, I've dropped the Press,' said Merton, 'I ask in a spirit of scientific curiosity.'

'Well, there is the *Dinornis*, the Moa of New Zealand. A bird as big as the Roc in the 'Arabian Nights.'"

'Have you seen *him*?'

'No, but I have seen *her*, the hen bird. She was sitting on eggs. No man knows her nest but myself, and old Te-iki-pa, the chief medicine-man, or Tohunga, of the Maori King. The Moa's eyrie is in the King's country. It is a difficult country, and a dangerous business, if the cock Moa chances to come home.'

'Bude, is this worthy of an old friend, this *blague*?'

'Do you doubt my word?'

'If you give me your word I must believe—that you dreamed it.'

Then a strange thing happened.

Bude walked to a small case of instruments that stood on a table in the smoking-room. He unlocked it, took out a lancet, brought a Rhodian bowl from a shelf, and bared his arm.

'Do you want proof?'

'Proof that you saw a hen Moa sitting?' asked Merton in amazement.

'Not exactly, but proof that Te-iki-pa knew a thing or two, quite as out of the way as the habitat of the Moa.'

'What do you want me to do?'

'Bare your arm, and hold it over the bowl.'

The room was full of the yellow dusky light of an early summer morning in London. Outside the heavy carts were rolling by: in full civilisation the scene was strange.

'The Blood Covenant?' asked Merton.

Bude nodded.

Merton turned up his cuff, Bude let a little blood drop into the bowl, then performed the same operation on his own arm.

'This is all rot,' he said, 'but without this I cannot show you, by virtue of my oath to Te-iki-pa, what I mean to show you. Now repeat after me what I am going to say.'

He spoke a string of words, among which Merton, as he repeated them, could only recognise *mana* and *atua*. The vowel sounds were as in Italian.

'Now these words you must never report to any one, without my permission.'

'Not likely,' said Merton, 'I only remember two of them, and these I knew before.'

'All right,' said Bude.

He then veiled his face in a piece of silk that lay on a sofa, and rapidly, in a low voice, chanted a kind of hymn in a tongue unknown to Merton. All this he did with a bored air, as if he thought the performance a superfluous mummerly.

'Now what shall I show you? Something simple. Look at the book-case, and think of any book you may want to consult.'

Merton thought of the volume in M. of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The volume slowly slid from the shelf, glided through the air to Merton, and gently subsided on the table near him, open at the word *Moa*.

Merton walked across to the book-case, took all the volumes from the shelf, and carefully examined the backs and sides for springs and mechanical advantages. There were none.

'Not half bad!' he said, when he had completed his investigation.

'You are satisfied that Te-iki-pa knew something? If you had seen what I have seen, if you had seen the three days dead——' and Bude shivered slightly.

'I have seen enough. Do you know how it is done?'

'No.'

'Well, a miracle is not what you call logical proof, but I believe that you did see the Moa, and a still more extraordinary bird, Te-iki-pa.'

'Yes, they talk of strange beasts, but "nothing is stranger

than man." Did you ever hear of the Berbalangs of Cagayan Sulu?'

'Never in my life,' said Merton.

'Heaven preserve me from *them*,' said Bude, and he gently stroked the strange muddy pearls in the sleeve-links on his loose shirt-cuff. 'Angels and ministers of grace defend us,' he exclaimed, crossing himself (he was of the old faith), and he fell silent.

It was a moment of emotion. Six silvery strokes were sounded from a little clock on the chimney-piece. The hour of confidences had struck.

'Bude, you are serious about Miss McCabe?' asked Merton.

'I mean to put it to the touch at Goodwood.'

'No use!' said Merton.

Bude changed colour.

'Are *you*——?'

'No,' interrupted Merton. 'But she is not free.'

'There is somebody in America? Nobody here, I think.'

'It is hardly that,' said Merton. 'Can you listen to rather a long story. I'll cut it as much as possible. You must remember that I am practically breaking my word of honour in telling you this. My honour is in your hands.'

'Fire away,' said Bude, pouring a bottle of Apollinaris water into a long tumbler, and drinking deep.

Merton told the tale of Miss McCabe's extraordinary involvement, and of the wild conditions on which her hand was to be won. 'And as to her heart, I think,' he added, 'if you pull off the prize—'

'If my heart by sighs can tell,
Lordling, I have marked her daily,
And I think she loves thee well.'

'Thank you for that, old cock,' replied the peer, shaking Merton's hand. He had recovered from his emotion.

'I'm on,' he added, after a moment's silence, 'but I shall enter as Jones Harvey.'

'His name and his celebrated papers will impress the trustees,' said Merton. 'Now what variety of nature shall you go for? Wild *men* count. Shall you fetch a Berbalang of what do you call it?'

Bude shuddered. 'Not much,' he said. 'I think I shall fetch a Moa.'

'But no steamer could hold that gigantic denizen of the forests.'

'You leave that to Jones Harvey. Jones is 'cute, some,' he said, reminiscent of the adored one, and he fell into a lover's reverie.

He was aroused by Merton's departure: he finished the Apollinaris water, took a bath, and went to bed.

II. The Adventure of the Muddy Pearls.

THE Earl of Bude had meant to lay his heart, coronet, and other possessions, real and personal, before the tiny feet of the fair American at Goodwood. But when he learned from Merton the involvements of this heiress and paragon, that her hand depended on the choice of the people, that the choice of the people was to settle on the adventurer who brought to New York the rarest of nature's varieties, the earl honourably held his peace. Yet he and the object of his love were constantly meeting, on the yachts and in the country houses of their friends, the aristocracy, and, finally, at shooting lodges in the Highlands. Their position, as the Latin *Delectus* says concerning the passion of love in general, was 'a strange thing, and full of anxious fears.' Bude could not declare himself, and Miss McCabe, not knowing that he knew her situation, was constantly wondering why he did not speak. Between fear of letting her secret show itself in a glance or a blush and hope of listening to the words which she desired to hear, even though she could not answer them as her heart prompted, she was unhappy. Bude could not resist the temptation to be with her—indeed, he argued to himself that, as her suitor and an adventurer about to risk himself in her cause, he had a right to be near her. Meanwhile Merton was the confidant of both of the perplexed lovers; at least, Miss McCabe (who, of course, told him nothing about Bude) kept him apprised as to the conduct of her trustees.

They had acted with honourable caution and circumspection. Their advertisements guardedly appealed to men of daring and of scientific distinction under the age of thirty-five. A professorship might have been in view for all that the world could see, if the world read the advertisements. Perhaps it was something connected with the manufacture of original explosives, for daring is not usually required in the learned. The testimonials and

printed works of applicants were jealously scrutinised. At personal interviews with competitors similar caution was observed. During three weeks in August the papers announced that Lord Bude was visiting the States; arrangements about a yachting match in the future was his pretence. He returned, he came to Scotland, and it was in a woodland path beside the Lochy that his resolution failed, and that he spoke to Miss McCabe. They were walking home together from the river in the melancholy and beautiful close of a Highland day in September. Behind them the gillies, at a respectful distance, were carrying the rods and the fish. The wet woods were fragrant, the voice of the stream was deepening, strange lights came and went on moor and hills and the distant loch. It was then that Bude opened his heart. He first candidly explained that his heart, he had supposed, was dead—buried on a distant and a deadly shore.

‘I reckon there’s a lost Lenore most times,’ Miss McCabe had replied to this confession.

But, though never to be forgotten, the memory of the lost one, Bude averred, was now merged in the light of a living love; his heart was no longer tenanted only by a shadow.

That of Miss McCabe stood still for a moment, her cheek paled, but the gallant girl was true to herself, to her father’s wish, to her native land, to the flag. She understood her adorer.

‘Guess I’m bespoke,’ said Miss McCabe abruptly.

‘You are another’s! Oh, despair!’ exclaimed the impassioned earl.

‘Yes, I reckon I’m the Bride of Seven, like the girl in the poem.’

‘The Bride of Seven?’ said Bude.

‘One out of *that* crowd will call me his,’ said Miss McCabe, handing to her adorer the list, which she had received by mail a day or two earlier, of the accepted competitors. He glanced over the names.

1. Dr. Hiram P. Dodge, of the Smithsonian Institute.
2. Alfred Jenkins, F.R.S., All Souls College, Oxford.
3. Dr. James Rustler, Columbia University.
4. Howard Fry, M.A., Ph.D., Trinity College, Cambridge.
5. Professor Potter, F.R.S., University of St. Andrews.
6. Professor Wilkinson, University of Harvard.
7. Jones Harvey, F.G.S., London, England.

‘In Heaven’s name,’ asked the earl, ‘what means this

mystification? Miss McCabe, Melissa, do not trifle with me. Is this part of the great American Joke? You are playing it pretty low down on me, Melissa!' he ended, the phrase being one of those with which she had made him familiar.

She laughed hysterically: 'It's honest Injun,' she said, and in the briefest terms she told him (what he knew very well) the conditions on which her future depended.

'They are a respectable crowd, I don't deny it,' she went on, 'but, oh, how dull! That Mr. Jenkins, I saw him at your Commemoration. He gave us luncheon, and showed us dry old bones of beasts and savage notions at the Museum. I *druther* have been on the creek,' by which name she intended the classical river Isis.

'Dr. Hiram P. Dodge is one of our rising scientists, a boss of the Smithsonian Institute. Well, Washington is a finer location than Oxford! Dr. Rustler is a crank: he thinks he can find a tall talk mummy that speaks an unknown tongue.'

'A Toltec mummy? Ah,' said Bude, 'I know where to find one of *them*.'

'Find it then, Alured!' exclaimed Miss McCabe, blushing scarlet and turning away. 'But you are not on the list. You are an idler, and not scientific, not worth a red cent. There, I've given myself away!' She wept.

They were alone, beneath the walls of a crumbling fortalice of Lochiel. The new risen moon saw Bude embrace her and dry her tears. A nameless blissful hope awakened in the fair American; help there *must* be, she thought, with these strong arms around her.

She rapidly disposed of the remaining names: of Howard Fry, who had a red beard; of Professor Potter of St. Andrews, whose accent was Caledonian; of Wilkinson, an ardent but unalluring scientist. 'As for Jones Harvey,' she said, 'I've canvassed everywhere, and I can't find anybody that ever saw him. I am more afraid of him than of all the other galoots; I don't know why.'

'He is reckoned very learned,' said Bude, 'and has not been thought ill-looking.'

'Do tell!' said Miss McCabe.

'Oh Melissa, can you even *dream* of another in an hour like this?'

'Did you ever see Jones Harvey?'

'Yes, I have met him.'

'Do you know him well?'

'No man knows him better.'

'Can't you get him to stand out, and, Alured, can't you—fetch along that old tall talk mummy? He would hit our people, being American himself.'

'It is impossible. Jones Harvey will never stand out,' and Bude smiled.

By the telepathy of the affections Miss McCabe was slowly informed, especially as Bude's smile widened almost unbecomingly, while he gazed into the deeps of her golden eyes.

'Alured,' she exclaimed, '*that's* why you went to the States. You—are—Jones Harvey!'

'Secret for secret,' whispered the earl. 'We have both given ourselves away. Unknown to the world I *am* Jones Harvey; to live for you: to love you: to dare; if need be, to die for you.'

'Well, you surprise me!' said Miss McCabe.

The narrator is unwilling to dilate on the delights of a privileged affection. In this love affair neither of the lovers could feel absolutely certain that their affection *was* privileged. The fair American had her own secret scheme if her hopes were blighted. She *could* not then obey the paternal will: she would retire into the life religious, and, as Sister Anna, would strive to forget the sorrows of Melissa McCabe. Bude had his own hours of gloom.

'It is a six-to-one chance,' he said to Merton when they met.

'Better than that, I think,' said Merton. 'First, you know exactly what you are entered for. Do the others? When you saw the trustees in the States, did they tell you about the prize?'

'Not they. They spoke of a pecuniary reward which would be eminently satisfactory, and of the opportunity for research and distinction, and all expenses found. I said that I preferred to pay my own way, which surprised and pleased them a good deal.'

'Well, then, knowing the facts, and the lady, you have a far stronger motive than the other six.'

'That's true,' said Bude.

'Again, though the others are good men (not that I like Jenkins of All Souls), none of them has your experience and knowledge. Jones Harvey's testimonials would carry it if it were a question of election to a professorship.'

'You flatter me,' answered Bude.

'*Lastly, did the trustees ask you if you were a married man?*'

'No, by Jove, they didn't.'

'Well, nothing about the competitors being unmarried men occurs in the clause of McCabe's last will and testament. He took it for granted, the prize being what it is, that only bachelors were eligible. But he forgot to say so, in so many words, and the trustees did not go beyond the deed. Now, Dodge is married; Fry of Trinity is a married don; Rustler (I happen to know) is an engaged man, who can't afford to marry a charming girl in Detroit, Michigan; and Professor Potter has buried one wife, and wedded another. If Rustler is loyal to his plighted word, you have nobody against you but Wilkinson and old Jenkins of All Souls—a tough customer, I admit, though what a Stinks man like him has to do at All Souls I don't know.'

'I say, this is hard on the other sportsmen! What ought I to do? Should I tell them?'

'You can't: you have no official knowledge of their existence. You only know through Miss McCabe. You have just to sit tight.'

'It seems beastly unsportsmanlike,' said Bude.

'Wills are often most carelessly drafted,' answered Merton, 'and the usual consequences follow.'

'It is not cricket,' said Bude, and really he seemed much more depressed than elated by the reduction of the odds against him from 6 to 1 to 2 to 1.

This is the magnificent type of character produced by our British system of athletic sports, though it is not to be doubted that the spirit of Science, in the American gentlemen, would have been equally productive of the sense of fair play.

A year, by the terms of McCabe's will, was allotted to the quest. Candidates were to keep the trustees informed as to their whereabouts. Six weeks before the end of the period the competitors would be instructed as to the port of rendezvous, where an ocean liner, chartered by the trustees, was to await them. Bude, as Jones Harvey, had obtained leave to sail his own steam yacht of 800 tons.

The earl's preparations were simple. He carried his usual stock of scientific implements, his usual armament, including two Maxim guns, and a package of considerable size and weight,

which was stored in the hold. As to the preparations of the others he knew nothing, but Miss McCabe became aware that Rustler had not left the American continent. Concerning Jenkins, and the probable aim of his enterprise, the object of his quest, she gleaned information from a junior Fellow of All Souls, who was her slave, was indiscreet, and did not know how deeply concerned she was in the expeditions. But she never whispered a word of what she knew to her lover, not even in the hour of parting.

It was in an unnamed creek of the New Zealand coast, six weeks before the end of the appointed year, that Bude received a telegram in cipher from the trustees. Bearded, and in blue spectacles, clad rudely as a mariner, Bude was to all, except Logan, who had accompanied him, plain Jones Harvey. None could have recognised in his rugged aspect the elegant aristocrat of Mayfair.

Bude took the message from the hands of the Maori bearer. As he opened it his fingers trembled with eagerness. 'Oh, Heaven! Here is the Hand of Destiny!' he exclaimed, when he had read the message; and with pallid face he dropped into a deck-chair.

'No bad news?' asked Logan with anxiety.

'The port of rendezvous,' said Bude, much agitated. 'Come down to my cabin.'

Entering the sumptuous cabin, Bude opened the locked door of a state-room, and uttered some words in an unknown tongue. A tall and very ancient Maori, tattooed with the native 'Moka' on every inch of his body, emerged. The snows of some eighty winters covered his broad breast and majestic head. His eyes were full of the secrets of primitive races. For clothing he wore two navy revolvers stuck in a waist-cloth.

'Te-iki-pa,' said Bude, in the Maori language, 'watch by the door: we must have no listeners, and your ears are keen as those of the youngest Rangatira' (warrior).

The august savage nodded, and, lying down on the floor, applied his ear to the chink at its foot.

'The port of tryst,' whispered Bude, to Logan, as they seated themselves at the remotest extremity of the cabin, 'is in Cagayan Sulu.'

'And where may that be?' asked Logan, lighting a cigarette.

'It is a small volcanic island, the most southerly of the Philippines.'

'American territory now,' said Logan. 'But what about it? If it was anybody but you, Bude, I should say he was in a funk.'

'I *am* in a funk,' answered Bude simply.

'Why?'

'I have been there before and left—a blood-feud.'

'What of it? We have one here, with the Maori King, about you know what. Have we not the Maxims, and any quantity of Lee-Metfords? Besides, you need not go ashore at Cagayan Sulu.'

'But they can come aboard. Bullets won't stop *them*.'

'Stop whom? The natives?'

'The Berbalangs: you might as well try to stop mosquitoes with Maxims.'

'Who are the Berbalangs, then?'

Bude paced the cabin in haggard anxiety. 'Least said, soonest mended,' he muttered.

'Well, I don't want your confidence,' said Logan, hurt.

'My dear fellow,' said Bude affectionately, 'you are likely to know soon enough. In the meantime, please accept this.'

He opened a strong box, which appeared to contain jewellery, and offered Logan a ring. Between two diamonds of the finest water it contained a bizarre muddy coloured pearl. 'Never let that leave your finger,' said Bude. 'Your life may hang on it.'

'It is a pretty talisman,' said Logan, placing the jewel on the little finger of his right hand. 'A token of some friendly chief, I suppose, at Cagayan—what do you call it?'

'Let us put it at that,' answered Bude; 'I must take other precautions.'

It seemed to Logan that these consisted in making similar presents to the officers and crew, all of whom were Englishmen. Te-iki-pa displaced his nose-ring and inserted his pearl in the orifice previously occupied by that ornament. A little chain of the pearls was hung on the padlock of the huge packing-case, which was the special care of Te-iki-pa.

'Luckily I had the yacht's painting altered before leaving England,' said Bude. 'I'll sail her under Spanish colours, and perhaps they won't spot her. Anyway, with the pearls—lucky I bought a lot—we ought to be safe enough. But if any one of the competitors has gone for specimens of the Berbalangs I fear, I sadly fear, the consequences.' His face clouded; he fell into a reverie.

Logan made no reply, but puffed rings of cigarette smoke into the still blue air. There was method in Bude's apparent madness, but Logan suspected that there was madness in his method.

A certain coolness had not ceased to exist between the friends when, after their long voyage, they sighted the volcanic craters of the lonely isle of Cagayan Sulu and beheld the Stars and Stripes waving from the masthead of the *George Washington* (Captain Noah P. Funkal).

Logan landed, and noted the harmless but well-armed half-Mahomedan natives of the village. He saw the other competitors, whose 'exhibits,' as Miss McCabe called them, were securely stored in the *George Washington*—strange spoils of far-off mysterious forests, and unplumbed waters of the remotest isles. Occasionally a barbaric yap, or a weird yell or hoot, was wafted on the air at feeding time. Jenkins of All Souls (whom he knew a little) Logan did not meet on the beach; he, like Bude, tarried aboard ship. The other adventurers were civil but remote, and there was a jealous air of suspicion on every face save that of Professor Potter. He, during the day of waiting on the island, played golf with Logan over links which he had hastily improvised. Beyond admitting, as they played, that *his* treasure was in a tank, 'and as well as could be expected, poor brute, but awful noisy,' Professor Potter offered no information.

'Our find is quiet enough,' said Logan.

'Does he give you trouble about food?' asked Mr. Potter.

'Takes nothing,' said Logan, adding, as he holed out, 'that makes me dormy two.'

From the rest of the competitors not even this amount of information could be extracted, and as for Captain Noah Funkal, he was taciturn, authoritative, and, Logan thought, not in a very good temper.

The *George Washington* and the *Pendragon* (so Jones Harvey had christened the yacht which under Bude's colours sailed as the *Sabrina*) weighed anchor simultaneously. If possible they were not to lose sight of each other, and they corresponded by signals and through the megalophone.

The hours of daylight on the first day of the return voyage passed peacefully at deck-cricket, as far as Logan, Bude, and such of the officers and men as could be spared were concerned. At last night came 'at one stride,' and the vast ocean plain was only illuminated by that pale claritude that falls from the stars. Logan and Bude (they had not dressed for dinner, but wore yachting suits) were smoking on deck, when, quite suddenly, a loud, almost musical, roar or hum was heard from the direction of the distant island.

'What's that?' asked Logan, leaping up and looking towards Cagayan Sulu.

'The Berbalangs,' said Bude coolly. 'You are wearing the ring I gave you?'

'Yes, always do,' said Logan, looking at his hand.

'All the men have their pearls; I saw to that,' said Bude.

'Why, the noise is dwindling,' said Logan. 'That is odd; it seemed to be coming this way.'

'So it is,' said Bude; 'the nearer they approach the less you hear them. When they have come on board you won't hear them at all.'

Logan stared, but asked no more questions.

The musical boom as it approached had died to a whisper, and then had fallen into perfect silence. At the very moment when the mysterious sound ceased, a swarm of things like red fire-flies, a host of floating specks of ruby light, invaded the deck in a cluster. The red points then scattered, approached each man on board, and paused when within a yard of his head or breast. Then they vanished. A queer kind of chill ran down Logan's spine; then the faint whispered musical moan tingled in each man's ears, and the sounds as they departed eastwards gathered volume and force till, in a moment, there fell perfect stillness.

Stillness, broken only by a sudden and mysterious chorus of animal cries from the *George Washington*. A kind of wail, high, shrieking, strenuous, ending in a noise as of air escaping from a pipe; a torrent of barks such as no known beast could utter, subsiding into moans that chilled the blood; a guttural scream, broken by heavy sounds as if of water lapping on a rock at uncertain intervals; a human cry, human words, with unfamiliar vowel sounds, soon slipping into quiet—these were among the horrors that assailed the ears of the voyagers in the *Pendragon*. Such a discord of laments has not tingled to the indifferent stars since the ice-wave swept into their last retreats, and crushed among the rocks that bear their fossil forms, the fauna of the preglacial period, the Ichthyosaurus, the Pterodactyle, the Guyas Cutis (or Ring-tailed Roarer), the Mastodon, and the Mammoth.

'What a row in the menagerie!' said Logan.

He was not answered.

Bude had fallen into a deck-chair, his face buried in his hands, his arms rocking convulsively.

'I say, old cock, pull yourself together,' said Logan, and

rushing down the companion stairs, he reappeared with a bottle of champagne. To extract the cork (how familiar, how reassuring, sounded the *cloop*!), and to pour the foaming beverage into two long tumblers, was, to the active Logan, the work of a moment. Shaking Bude, he offered him the beaker; the earl drained it at a draught. He shuddered, but rose to his feet.

'Not a man alive on that doomed vessel,' he was saying, when anew the still air was rent by the raucous notes of a megalophone:

'Is *your* exhibit all right?'

'Fit as a fiddle,' answered Logan through a similar instrument.

'Our exhibits are gone bust,' answered Captain Noah Funkal.

'Our professors are in fits. Our darkeys are all dead. Can your skipper come aboard?'

'Just launching a boat,' cried Logan.

Bude gave the necessary orders. His captain stepped up to him and saluted.

'Do you know what these red fire-flies were that come aboard, sir?' he asked.

'Fire-flies? Oh, *muscæ volitantes sonoræ*, a common phenomenon in these latitudes,' answered Bude.

Logan rejoiced to see that the earl was himself again.

'The other gentlemen's scientific beasts don't seem to like them, sir?'

'So Captain Funkal seems to imply,' said Bude, and, taking the ropes, with Logan beside him, while the *Pendragon* lay to, he steered the boat towards the *George Washington*.

The captain welcomed them on deck in a scene of unusual character. He himself had a revolver in one hand, and a belaying-pin in the other; he had been quelling, by the tranquillising methods of Captain Kettle, a mutiny caused by the terror of the crew. The sailors had attempted to leap overboard in the alarm caused by the invasion of the Berbalangs.

'You will excuse my friend and myself for not being in evening dress, during a visit at this hour,' said Bude in the silkiest of tones.

'Glad to see you shipshape, gentlemen,' answered the American mariner. 'My dudes of professors were prancing round in Tuxedos and Prince Alberts when the darned fire-flies came aboard.'

Bude bowed. Study of Miss McCabe had taught him that Tuxedos and Prince Alberts mean evening dress and frock-coats.

'Did *your* men have fits?' asked the captain.

'My captain, Captain Hardy, made a scientific inquiry about the—insects,' said Bude. 'The crew showed no emotion.'

'I guess our fire-bugs were more on business than yours,' said Captain Funkal; 'they've wrecked the exhibits, and killed the darkeys with fright: except two, and *they* were exhibits themselves. Will you honour me by stepping into my cabin, gentlemen? I am glad to see sane white men to-night.'

Bude and Logan followed him through a scene of melancholy interest. Beside the deck, within a shattered palisade, lay huddled the vast corpse of the Mylodon of Patagonia, couchant amidst his fodder of chopped hay. The expression of the huge animal was placid and urbane in death. He was the victim of the ceaseless curiosity of science. Two of the five-horned antelope giraffes of Central Africa lay in a confused heap of horns and hoofs. Beside an immense tank lay a figure in evening dress, swearing in a subdued tone. Logan recognised Professor Potter. He gently laid his hand on the Professor's shoulder. The savant looked up:

'It is a dommed mismanaged affair,' he said. 'I could have brought the poor beast safe enough from the Clyde to New York, but the Americans made me harl him round by yon island of camstairry deevils,' and he shook his fist in the direction of Cagayan Sulu.

'What had you got?' asked Logan.

'The *Beathach un Loch na bheiste*,' said Potter. 'I drained the Loch to get him. Fortunately,' he added, 'it was at the expense of the Trust.'

After a few words of commonplace but heartfelt condolence, Logan descended the companion, and followed Bude and Captain Funkal into the cabin of that officer. The captain placed refreshments on the table.

'Now, gentlemen,' he said, 'you have seen the least riled of my professors, and you can guess what the rest are like. Professor Rustler is weeping in his cabin over a shrivelled old mummy. "Never will he speak again," says he, and I am bound to say that I *hev* heard the critter discourse once. The mummy let some awful yells out of him when the fire-bugs came aboard.'

'Yes, we heard a human cry,' said Bude.

'I had thought the talk was managed with a concealed gramophone,' said the captain, 'but it wasn't. The Bunyip from Central Australia has gone to his long home. That was Professor Wilkinson's pet. There is nothing left alive out of the

lot but the natives that Professor Jenkins of England brought in from Cagayan Sulu. I reckon them two niggers are somehow at the bottom of the whole ruction.'

'Indeed, and why?' asked Bude.

'Why, sir—I am addressing Professor Jones Harvey?'

Bude bowed. 'Harvey, captain, but not professor—simple amateur seaman and explorer.'

'Sir, your hand,' said the captain. 'Your friend is not a professor?'

'Not I,' said Logan, smiling.

The captain solemnly shook hands. 'Gentlemen, you have said,' he said, a supreme tribute of respect. 'Well, about these two natives. I never liked taking them aboard. They are, in consequence of the triumph of our arms, American subjects, natives of the conquered Philippines. I am no lawyer, and they may be citizens, they may have votes. They are entitled, anyway, to the protection of the Flag, and I would have entered them as steerage passengers. But that Professor Jenkins (and the other professors agreed) would have it that they came under the head of scientific exhibits. And they did allow that the critters were highly dangerous. I guess they were right.'

'Why, what could they do?'

'Well, gentlemen, I heard stories on shore that I took no stock in. I am not a superstitious man, but they allowed that these darkeys are not of a common tribe, but what the papers call "highly developed mediums." And I guess they are at the bottom of the stramash.'

'Captain Funkal, may I be frank with you?' asked Bude.

'I am hearing you,' said the captain.

'Then, to put it shortly, I have been at Cagayan Sulu before, on an exploring cruise. That was in 1897. I never wanted to go back to it. Logan, did I not regret the choice of that port when the news reached us in New Zealand?'

Logan nodded. 'You funk'd it,' he said.

'When I was at Cagayan Sulu in 1897 I heard from the natives of a singular tribe in the centre of the island. This tribe is the Berbalangs.'

'That's what Professor Jenkins called them,' said the captain.

'The Berbalangs are subject to neither of the chiefs in the island. No native will approach their village. They are cannibals. The story is that they can throw themselves into a kind of trance. They then project a something or other—spirit,

astral body, influence of some kind—which flies forth, making a loud noise when distant.’

‘That’s what we heard,’ said the captain.

‘But is silent when they are close at hand.’

‘Silent they were,’ said the captain.

‘They then appear as points of red flame.’

‘That’s so,’ interrupted the captain.

‘And cause death to man and beast, apparently by terror. I have seen,’ said Bude, shuddering, ‘the face of a dead native of high respectability, into whose house, before my own eyes, these points of flame had entered. I had to force the door, it was strongly barred within. I never mentioned the fact before, knowing that I could not expect belief.’

‘Well, sir, I believe you. You are a white man.’

Bude bowed, and went on. ‘The circumstances, though not generally known, have been published, captain, by a gentleman of reputation, Mr. Edward Forbes Skertchley, of Hong-Kong. His paper indeed, in the *Journal* of a learned association, the Asiatic Society of Bengal,¹ induced me, most unfortunately, to visit Cagayan Sulu, when it was still nominally in the possession of the Spaniards. My experience was similar to that of Mr. Skertchley, but, for personal reasons, was much more awful and distressing. One of the most beautiful of the island girls, a person of most amiable and winning character, not, alas! of my own faith’—Bude’s voice broke—‘was one of the victims of the Berbalangs. . . . I loved her.’

He paused, and covered his face with his hands. The others respected and shared his emotion. The captain, like all sailors, sympathetic, dashed away a tear.

‘One thing I ought to add,’ said Bude, recovering himself, ‘I am no more superstitious than you are, Captain Funkal, and doubtless science will find a simple, satisfactory, and normal explanation of the facts, the existence of which we are both compelled to admit. I have heard of no well authenticated instance in which the force, whatever it is, has been fatal to Europeans. The superstitious natives, much as they dread the Berbalangs, believe that they will not attack a person who wears a cocoa-nut pearl. Why this should be so, if so it is, I cannot guess. But, as it is always well to be on the safe side, I provided myself five years ago with a collection of these objects, and when

¹ Part III. No. 1, 1896. Baptist Mission Press. Calcutta 1897.

I heard that we were ordered to Cagayan Sulu I distributed them among my crew. My friend, you may observe, wears one of the pearls. I have several about my person.' He disengaged a pin from his necktie, a muddy pearl set with burning rubies. 'Perhaps, Captain Funkal, you will honour me by accepting this specimen, and wearing it while we are in these latitudes? If it does no good, it can do no harm. We, at least, have not been molested, though we witnessed the phenomena.'

'Sir,' said the captain, 'I appreciate your kindness, and I value your gift as a memorial of one of the most singular experiences in a seafaring life. I drink your health and your friend's. Mr. Logan, to *you*.' The captain pledged his guests. 'And now, gentlemen, what am I to do?'

'That, captain, is for your own consideration.'

'I'll carpet that lubber, Jenkins,' said the captain, and, leaving the cabin, he returned with the Fellow of All Souls. His shirt front was ruffled, his white neck-cloth awry, his pallid countenance betrayed a sensitive second-rate mind, not at unity with itself. He nodded sullenly to Logan: Bude he did not know.

'Professor Jenkins, Mr. Jones Harvey,' said the captain. 'Sit down, sir. Take a drink; you seem to need one.' Jenkins drained the tumbler, and sat with downcast eyes, his finger drumming nervously on the table.

'Professor Jenkins, sir, I reckon you are the cause of the unparalleled disaster to this exploring expedition. Why did you bring these two natives of our territory on board, you well and duly knowing that the end would not justify the proceedings?'

A furtive glance from Jenkins lighted on the diamonds that sparkled in Logan's ring. He caught Logan's hand.

'Traitor!' he cried. 'What will not scientific jealousy dare, that meanest of the passions!'

'What the devil do you mean?' said Logan angrily, wrenching his hand away.

'You leave Mr. Logan alone, sir,' said the captain. 'I have two minds to put you in irons, Mr. Professor Jenkins. If you please, explain yourself.'

'I denounce this man and his companion,' said Jenkins, noticing a pearl ring on Bude's finger; 'I denounce them of conspiracy, mean conspiracy, against this expedition, and against the American flag.'

'As how?' inquired the captain, lighting a cigar with irritating calmness.

'They wear these pearls, in which I had trusted for absolute security against the Berbalangs.'

'Well, I wear one too,' said the captain, pointing to the pin in his necktie. 'Are you going to tell me that I am a traitor to the flag, sir? I warn you, Professor, to be careful.'

'What am I to think?' asked Jenkins.

'It is rather more important what you *say*,' replied the captain. 'What is this fine conspiracy?'

'I had read in England about the Berbalangs.'

'Probably in Mr. Skertchley's curious paper in the *Journal* of the Asiatic Society of Bengal?' asked Bude with suavity.

Jenkins merely stared at him.

'I deemed that specimens of these American subjects, dowered with their strange and baneful gift, were well worthy of the study of American savants; and I knew that the pearls were a certain prophylactic.'

'What's that?' asked the captain.

'A kind of Universal Pain-Killer,' said Jenkins.

'Well, you surprise me,' said the captain, 'a man of your education. Pain-Killer!' and he expectorated dexterously.

'I mean that the pearls keep off the Berbalangs,' said Jenkins.

'Then why didn't you lay in a stock of the pearls?' asked the captain.

'Because these conspirators had been before me. These men, or their agents, had bought up, just before our arrival, every pearl in the island. They had wormed out my secret, knew the object of my adventure, knew how to ruin us all, and I denounce them.'

'A corner in pearls. Well, it was darned 'cute,' said the captain impartially. 'Now, Mr. Jones Harvey, and Mr. Logan, sir, what have *you* to say?'

'Did Mr. Jenkins—I think you said that this gentleman's name is Jenkins?—see the agent engaged in making this corner in pearls, or learn his name?' asked Bude.

'He was an Irish American, one McCarthy,' answered Jenkins sullenly.

'I am unacquainted with the gentleman,' said Bude, 'and I never employed anyone for any such purpose. My visit to Cagayan Sulu was some years ago, just after that of Mr. Skertchley. Captain Funkal, I have already acquainted you with the facts, and you were kind enough to say that you accepted my statement.'

'I did, sir, and I do,' answered the captain. 'As for *you*,' he went on, 'Mr. Professor Jenkins, when you found that your game was dangerous, indeed likely to be ruinous, to this scientific expedition, and to the crew of the *George Washington*—damn you, sir—you should have dropped it. I don't know that I ever swore at a passenger before, and I beg your pardon, you two English gentlemen, for so far forgetting myself. I don't know, and these gentlemen don't know, who made the corner, but I don't think our citizens want either you or your exhibits. The whole population of the States, sir, not to mention the live stock, cannot afford to go about wearing cocoa-nut pearls, a precaution which would be necessary if I landed these venomous Berbalangs of yours on our shores: man and wife too, likely to have a family of young Berbalangs. Snakes are not a patch on these darkeys, and our coloured population, at least, would be busted up.'

The captain paused, perhaps attracted by the chance of thus solving the negro problem.

'So, I'll tell you what it is, gentlemen; and, Professor Jenkins, I'll turn back and land these two native exhibits, and I'll put *you* on shore, Professor Jenkins, at Cagayan Sulu. Perhaps before a steamer touches there—which is not once in a blue moon—you'll have had time to write an exhaustive monograph on the Berbalangs, their manners and customs.'

Jenkins (who knew what awaited him) threw himself on the floor at the feet of Captain Funkal. Horrified by the abject distress of one who, after all, was their countryman, Bude and Logan induced the captain to seclude Jenkins in his cabin. They then, by their combined entreaties, prevailed on the officer to land the Berbalangs on their own island, indeed, but to drop Jenkins later on civilised shores. Dawn saw the *George Washington* and the *Pendragon* in the port of Cagayan Sulu, where the fetters of the two natives, ill looking people enough, were knocked off, and they themselves deposited on the quay, where, not being popular, they were received by a hostile demonstration. The two vessels then resumed their eastward course. The taxidermic appliances without which Jones Harvey never sailed, and the services of his staff of taxidermists, were placed at the disposal of his brother savants. By this means a stuffed Mylodon, a stuffed Beathach, stuffed five-horned antelopes, and a stuffed Bunyip, with a common gorilla, and the Toltec mummy, now for ever silent, were passed through the New York Custom House, and consigned to the McCabe Museum of Natural Varieties.

The immense case that contained the discovery of Jones Harvey was also carefully conveyed to an apartment prepared for it in the same repository. The competitors sought their hotels, Te-iki-pa marching beside Logan and Jones Harvey. But, by special arrangement, either Jones Harvey or his Maori ally always slept beside their mysterious case, which they watched with passionate attention. Two or three days were spent in setting up the stuffed exhibits. Then the trustees, through *The Yellow Flag* (the paper founded by the late Mr. McCabe), announced to the startled citizens the nature of the competition. On successive days the vast theatre of the McCabe Museum would be open, and each competitor, in turn, would display to the public his contribution, and lecture on his adventures and on the variety of nature which he had secured.

While the death of the animals was deplored, nothing was said, for obvious reasons, about the causes of the catastrophe.

The general excitement was intense. Interviewers scoured the city, and flocked, to little purpose, around the officials of the McCabe Museum. Special trains were run from all quarters. The hotels were thronged. 'America,' it was announced, 'had taken hold of science, and was just going to make science hum.'

On the first day of the exhibition, Dr. Hiram Dodge displayed the stuffed Mylodon. The agitation was unprecedented. America had bred, in ancient days, and an American citizen had discovered, the monstrous yet amiable animal whence prehistoric Patagonia drew her milk supplies and cheese stuffs. Mr. Dodge's adventures, he modestly said, could only be adequately narrated by Mr. Rider Haggard. Unluckily the Mylodon had not survived the conditions of the voyage, the change of climates. The applause was thunderous. Mr. Dodge gracefully expressed his obligations to his fair and friendly rival, Mr. Jones Harvey, who had loaned his taxidermic appliances. It did not appear to the public that the Mylodon could be excelled in interest. The Toltec mummy, as it would no longer talk, was flat on a falling market, nor was Mr. Rustler's narrative of its conversational powers accepted by the scepticism of the populace, though it was corroborated by Captain Funkal, Professor Dodge, and Professor Wilkinson, who swore affidavits before a notary, within the hearing of the multitude. The Beathach, exhibited by Professor Potter, was reckoned of high anatomical interest by scientific characters, but it was not of American habitat, and left the people relatively cold. On the other hand, all the Macleans and Macdonnells of Canada and Nova Scotia

wept tears of joy at the corroboration of their tribal legends, and the popularity of Professor Potter rivalled even that of Mr. Ian Maclaren. He was at once engaged by Major Pond for a series of lectures. The adventures of Howard Fry, in the taking of his gorilla, were reckoned interesting, as were those of the captor of the Bunyip, but both animals were now undeniably dead. The people could not feed them with waffles and hominy cakes in the gardens of the institute. The savants wrangled on the anatomical differences and resemblances of the Bunyip and the Beathach; still the critters were, to the general mind, only stuffed specimens, though unique. The African five-horned brutes (though in quieter times they would have scored a triumph) did not now appeal to the heart of the people.

At last came the day when, in the huge crowded amphitheatre, with Te-iki-pa by his side, Jones Harvey addressed the congregation. First he exhibited a skeleton of a *dinornis*, a bird of about twenty-five feet in height.

'Now,' he went on, 'thanks to the assistance of a Maori gentleman, my friend the Tohunga Te-iki-pa'—(cheers, Te-iki bows his acknowledgments)—'I propose to exhibit to you *this*.'

With a touch on the mechanism he unrolled the valves of a gigantic incubator. Within, recumbent on cotton wool, the almost frenzied spectators perceived two monstrous eggs, like those of the Roc of Arabian fable. Te-iki-pa now chanted a brief psalm in his own language. One of the eggs rolled gently in its place; then the other. A faint crackling noise was heard, first from one, then from the other egg. From each emerged the featherless head of a fowl—the species hitherto unknown to the American continent. The necks pushed forth, then the shoulders, then both shells rolled away in fragments, and the spectators gazed on two fledgling Moas. Te-iki-pa, on inspection, pronounced them to be cock and hen, and in healthy condition. The breed, he said, could doubtless be acclimatised.

The professors of the museum, by Jones Harvey's request, then closely examined the chickens. There could be no doubt of it, they unanimously asserted: these specimens were living *deinornis* (which, for scientific men, is not a bad shot at the dual of *deinornis*). The American continent was now endowed, through the enterprise of Mr. Jones Harvey, not only with living specimens, but with a probable breed of a species hitherto thought extinct.

The cheering was led by Captain Funkal, who waved the Stars

and Stripes and the Union Jack. Words cannot do justice to the scene. Women fainted, strong men wept, enemies embraced each other. For details we must refer to the files of *The Yellow Flag*. A *plébiscite* to select the winner of the McCabe Prize was organised by that journal. The Moas (bred and exhibited by Mr. Jones Harvey) simply romped in, by 1,732,901 votes, the Mylodon being a bad second, thanks to the Irish vote.

Bude telegraphed 'Victory,' and Miss McCabe by cable answered 'Bully for us.'

The secret of these lovers was well kept. None who watches the fascinating Countess of Bude as she moves through the gilded saloons of Mayfair guesses that her hand was once the prize of success in a scientific exploration. The identity of Jones Harvey remains a puzzle to the learned. For the rest, a letter in which Jenkins told the story of the Berbalangs was rejected by the Editor of *Nature*, and has not yet passed even the Literary Committee of the Society for Psychical Research. The classical authority on the Berbalangs is still the paper by Mr. Skertchley in the *Journal* of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.¹ The scientific gentlemen who witnessed the onslaught of the Berbalangs have convinced themselves (except Jenkins) that nothing of the sort occurred in their experience. The evidence of Captain Funkal is rejected as 'marine.'

Te-iki-pa decided to remain in New York as custodian of the Moas. He occasionally obliges by exhibiting a few feats of native conjuring, when his performances are attended by the *élite* of the city. He knows that his countrymen hold him in feud, but he is aware that they fear even more than they hate the ex-medicine man of his Maori Majesty.

The generosity of Bude and his Countess heaped rewards on Merton, who vainly protested that his service had not been professional.

The frequent appearance of a new American novelist, whose works sell 250,000 copies in their first month, demonstrates that Mr. McCabe's scheme for raising the level of genius has been as satisfactory as it was original. Genius is riz.

But who 'cornered' the muddy pearls in Cagayan Sulu?

That secret is only known to Lady Bude, her confessor, and the Irish-American agent whom she employed. For she, as we saw, had got at the nature of poor Jenkins's project and had

¹ See also Monsieur Henri Junod, in *Les Ba-Ronga*. Attinger, Neuchatel, 1898.

acquainted herself with the remarkable properties of the pearls, which she cornered.

As a patriot, she consoles herself for the loss of the other exhibits to her country, by the reflection that Berbalangs would have been the most mischievous of pauper immigrants. But of all this Bude knows nothing.

(To be continued.)

In a Devonshire Garden.

II. AT LUSH TIME.

SUMMER is a-comin' in ; the peas are flowering, the strawberries are beginning to form ; worms have gone to seek congenial dampness in a lower stratum ; the birds are on the look-out for other food, for their youngsters are clamouring, and if worms and insects are scarce upon the sun-dried surface of the soil and the snails are all eaten, some substitute must be found to fill their stomachs withal. Each day my lord blackbird inspects the growing strawberries, the currants, the raspberries, the cherries—anxious as to their progress towards maturity ; for he will not allow the youngsters to partake until the fruit is ripe and wholesome. The time has undoubtedly come to spread our nets—not, indeed, to catch blackbirds, but to save a few berries for ourselves !

Net your strawberry beds how you will, but you shall not keep the birds out. One or two will find a way in, and a way out too, if they are old ones. The young birds may lose their heads and become entangled in their frantic efforts to free themselves, but not so the parents. They know what they know. 'Where a thrush has been a thrush may go' is their maxim ; and when suddenly alarmed, away flits Mrs. Thrush out of the secret exit which she has found for herself and remembered.

There are a certain pair of blackbirds in the garden—there are several pairs—but these are very old friends ; they and we have been on intimate terms for years. These two are shocking thieves. They know very well that they have no business among the strawberry beds, but they see no bar to helping themselves to my property in the circumstance that our friendship is an ancient one. They rob the strawberry beds systematically. When her ladyship is within, committing the petty larceny of which I have so often convicted her, my lord is without, on guard, 'keeping cave,' as we should have called it at school ; and when his lordship would refresh

himself my lady is on duty, to see that no human creature interferes with his security. As if his safety could ever be in danger at my hands! He is welcome to a few strawberries, bless him! and so is his dear good lady, and his music is cheap at that.

Our friendship is a romantic one and must be recorded in this place. One summer five blackbird bantlings were found adrift in the garden by a very small person whose heart bled for them by reason of a bird-loving cat then rampant in the establishment. That small person collected the little ones and brought them up in a large cage which was hung upon a nail on the wall of the house on the garden side. There the parents visited them constantly, adding special dainties to the fare provided for them, and feeding and conversing with them through the wicker bars. Fat and jolly grew the little bantlings, as well they might, receiving double rations and taking little exercise; and when the day came upon which they might safely be trusted to look after themselves, the cat having been by that time disposed of, they were allowed to fly, the parents being witnesses of the act of liberation.

Food was, however, placed for them daily upon a window-sill—bits of bread, pudding, and (the Small Person insisted upon this) a saucer of milk. And each day the family came down *en masse* to partake. The parents would feed the youngsters, actually taking bread, and (to Somebody's huge delight) dipping the pieces in milk before popping them into the gaping mouths prepared to receive them.

The story does not quite end here. I like the sequel, for it displays my old friends, blackbird *père* and *mère*, in a new and charming light: as capable of feeling gratitude for past favours, and as reminiscent of a friendship formed with mankind, perhaps even of a desire to maintain the good relations—at any rate, I like to regard their conduct as displaying these delightful traits.

For in the following spring, as we sat at breakfast one day, the windows being wide open upon the lawn, down suddenly flew our old friends the parent birds of last summer, and with them came six little strangers, new on the wing, fluffy, brown, delicious little creatures, who paid indeed little attention to our expressions of delight and admiration, but evinced the usual insatiable desire to be fed. With their parents, however, it was different. They—good souls—gave every possible sign that they had brought the bairns to be introduced to and admired by ourselves, in recognition or remembrance of our relations last year

It may, of course, be said that the visit was merely an interested

one—that it was desired to show us that here were more objects for our generosity ; but this, I am certain, was not so, for though we put out food for the little strangers it was never touched. After this you will not be surprised to know that one looks upon my lord blackbird and his lady with more than the usual admiring regard which is the privilege of their tribe at our hands, and that I can bear with equanimity even to see them among the strawberries and at the wrong side of the cherry nets !

In the midst of the plum-tree up against the south wall, another pair of blackbirds are this season bringing up their second family. If you pass by stealth you may see my lady sitting upon the nest just at the level of your eyes, in which case she will remain, recognising that it is too late to escape, and preferring to face the odds and sit tight. She knows there is not really much risk in doing so, for she is quite intimately acquainted with each of us, and must have realised long since that the last thing any one of us would do would be to injure either herself or those she loves. I use this word advisedly, for I am certain she loves her children, and that she has a soft place for that dusky old yellow-billed irreclaimable, her lord, is equally sure. I have seen her alarmed, to the point of pathos, when his lordship has had the misfortune to be discovered in the strawberry net. He spends most of his time there, as a matter of fact, while the fruit is in season : makes it his club, and introduces his sons at his own private entrance, of the position of which he supposes that I am ignorant. But when he is suddenly discovered within by my unexpected appearance upon the scene, he is apt to lose his head for a moment or two, and to fly hither and thither under the netting, uttering cries of alarm, real or assumed ; while the lady, who is either 'keeping *cave*' outside or is attracted by his lamentations, hastens to the scene and adds her voice to the frightened din.

Possibly the whole thing is done with a purpose, in order that I may be led to believe his entry as well as the exit of which he presently avails himself are due to the chance finding of a hole that has escaped observation, and that he acts thus in order to distract my attention from the real gap, which he uses at discretion, and of the exact position of which I am very well aware.

But to return to my lady. Walk boldly and noisily along the path towards her nest and you will never catch her upon it. She is off and away while the apple-tree is between her and you. Neither will she allow you to see her in the act of returning to

her nest. If I were to analyse her feelings as to staying or going, I should say that she does not care to run any unnecessary risks, but that she is ready to take the odds—knowing them to be small—if distinctly caught napping. In the latter case she will sit and watch you while you watch her. Her beady, unblinking eye will remain fixed upon you until you retire. If you advance, her heart may possibly fail her—I have known it do so—and suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, she has disappeared among the foliage of the plum-tree and away; and exactly where she sat are four or five beaks wide-opened heavenward, as though pathetically imploring from the sky above them some succulent answer to the unspoken prayer of a craving stomach.

I am busy giving my potato lines a last earthing-up, and as I rest for a moment from my labours in order to replenish the stock of breath in my lungs—for hoeing potatoes is exhausting work if done at high pressure—something flies under my nose, within an inch or two, and settles a yard away. This is my very best friend, the robin. His lady is busy with the family up yonder, and he has come to fetch her a worm from the freshly turned earth at my feet. He is not shy. He is persuaded, I believe, that I do all this earth-turning for his benefit. As a rule he is on the spot the moment my spade or hoe has made its first dip into the soil.

If my exertions reveal no worms, he will fly close under my nose as an intimation that I am digging in the wrong place and must change my venue if I want to find worms. He sits and whistles on the handle of the wheelbarrow. 'Come over here,' he says. 'You're wasting time and labour; there are no worms just there. Dig where I am standing: I saw a fellow disappear just before I could get at him.'

Perhaps a moment later my friend finds that his judgment was premature, and that my exertions have provided him with a luscious feast even from the quarter of which he did not expect great things. When one thinks of it, how wonderful is the appetite with which birds such as thrushes and robins and other worm-eaters are provided! Count up, if you can, the number of worms one thrush will gobble up during the day; measure the aggregate, then take the comparative sizes of the bird and of a human being and calculate, if you can, the mass of food you would require to eat in order to equal the performance of our speckled friend there, hopping about upon the 'wet, bird-haunted English lawn.' Fifty yards of German sausage might about represent his daily consumption of worms if reduced to our comparative measurements.

I often think, when turning up the earth in my garden, that those excellent, useful fellows the worms are very much to be pitied. Setting aside the ordinary dangers to which they are liable at the hands—or beaks—of their natural enemies so soon as they come to the surface to smell the air and take a glimpse of the sunshine or feel the cooling rain, they are in constant peril of those arch-foes to the worm-tribe—the spade, the hoe, the rake, and the rest of the cruel list of garden implements.

Imagine the worry and nuisance of it. In the first place, one may find himself sliced in two with lightning-like abruptness—one portion of his frame being rudely thrown to the east and another to the west. Worms, we are told, are less annoyed by this treatment than most other living creatures, but even a worm must be somewhat put out when so unexpected a severance occurs; for at any rate he is forced to start life afresh as two worms, even though resourceful Nature should supply him with a new head and a new tail, replacing at each end the missing appendage.

But putting aside this crowning disaster, it must surely be bad enough to be suddenly uprooted and upheaved and deposited heaven knows where, a yard or two maybe, from the old home—a long way for a two-inch worm—naked and lost and forlorn; a wriggling thing upon the surface of the soil, exposed to the attacks of every enemy—giddy, perhaps, and unable for a moment or two to make the necessary twists which will restore one to the security of subterraneous darkness.

What a mercy it is that we are not liable to these little surprises at the hands of some huge creatures with terrible steel implements that suddenly sever us neatly in two pieces, together with the ceiling, the bed one is lying upon, and the floor of the bedroom; or upheave us with equal suddenness and land us kicking and struggling upon the roofs of our houses, to clamber back into the shelter of our ruined homes before some watchful, preying terror shall have snapped us up and gobbled us down: some horrible creature as large and as dreadful as the antediluvian monsters in the Crystal Palace grounds, for instance. Truly it is a matter of congratulation that there are neither colossal spades nor titanic thrushes to prey upon us, and that the conditions of our existence are not liable to the sudden surprises and upheavals which must render the lot of the worm so unenviable.

Yet, for the matter of that, who would be a partridge, a pheasant, a grouse? any creature that is pursued or slain for food? Thank heaven, indeed, that we are at the top of the scale of life,

and do not constitute a regular article of diet at the dinner-table of some superior creature.

To-day I came across a little snake lying, nearly dead, upon a garden path. It had a small hole at the nape of the neck, another in the middle of the back, and it appeared to have lost a quarter of an inch of its tail. Who had done this? Was it Mrs. Thrush, who has a large family to provide for, and is indeed unacquainted, at this season, with fear? At first sight I set down the snake's misfortunes to the lawn-mower, which, I thought, must have caught the poor thing and flung it aside, mangled and dying; but the wounds looked more like the peckings of a sharp beak, and moreover, when I returned by the same path a few hours later, there remained of this eight-inch snake but a bare two inches of the middle, while here and there between the bushes and under the shelter of a line of growing peas sat puffed-out little thrushes unwilling to move—fat, well-fed, speckled little yellow rascals that could fly if they liked, and would have flown, I doubt not, but for those six disappeared inches of snake-flesh, distributed with the impartiality and calculating fairness of the mother-bird. How just she is, this most worthy Mrs. Thrush! I have watched her feeding her family. Let one of them be ever so insistent and cunning; let him protest ever so loudly with wide mouth and quivering body that he perishes with hunger, but he shall receive nothing out of his turn. 'You have just had a mouthful of snail, you greedy brat,' says mother; 'shut that big mouth of yours, and be quiet until Bobby and Willie and Jane and the rest have had an equal portion!'

That hoeing of potatoes is back-breaking work, and one is glad of a stroll on the beach to straighten stiffened muscles. The sea's song was in my ears as I worked in the garden; let us go and see what he is about this morning. That foolish pup the Autocrat of course insists upon accompanying one. He is not quite happy, though he was inclined to be boisterously so when we left the garden. The sea is on his mind; there is movement on the water to-day; a gentle swirl of the tide among the rocks—and this deeply offends and displeases him. He has bitten at the sea several times, but neither bite nor yelp has intimidated the moving waters, and this is an intolerable offence to the Autocrat.

A huge, long-legged heron quietly takes flight from his seat upon a big rock in the delicious cove near by, the instant we appear in it; a couple of kingfishers dart backwards and for-

wards; the sunlight lies upon the face of the sea softly kissing the beautiful element; larks are outsinging one another overhead; God is in Heaven.

June will be here in two days. The season is in full swing in London—let those enjoy it who prefer the hot dusty streets of town to this; the chatter of drawing-room conversation to the delicious peace of wave babble and of bird song. We are not all tarred with the same brush; many there are who would see nothing fascinating in such matters as these—in the dew-pearled woods at early morning; in the seashore at any time of day or season of the year; some do not even love the culture of potatoes! The country is never more beautiful than now, the sea never more fascinating. Well, *De gustibus non est disputandum!* After all, it is foolish to attempt to lay down general rules for happiness: each of us must be happy according to his own opportunities, his personal tendencies, and his private ideas in such matters.

There is the sudden croak of a cock-pheasant from these fields behind me that border upon a small spinney. I know him well, though at this moment I do not see him. I know where he feeds and, approximately, where his missus is seated upon her nestful of eggs. The Autocrat pricks up his ears and growls: 'What right had that creature to make a sound?'

'Who was it, Autocrat?' I say. 'And what right has he or anyone else to live or breathe or utter sound without your permission?'

'None, none—a thousand times none!' barks the Autocrat. 'Let me get at him, and I'll soon show him so.'

Presently we leave our cove and climb the crumbly red cliff that divides us from the edge of the field above. As my head reaches the level of the upper ground there is another croak and a whirring of wings, and my lord pheasant has departed; he mistrusts us. Autocrat would be after him, but there I draw the line, and a switch across the tail as he sets his limbs in motion brings him back with a yelp to my feet. Away sails my lord, over the next field and into another which has lately been ploughed; and in the far corner of this, the spot towards which he is evidently heading, there are half-a-dozen brown objects that stand and run, then stand and run again.

I stalk them, taking them in flank and reaching—by favour of the Autocrat, who, happily, is ignorant of their proximity—within forty yards of the party. The Autocrat will not allow me

to watch them for long, but I count them—five hens and three cocks, including my friend. I raise my head above the hedge; a hen sees me and runs under cover, the rest following and the cocks bringing up the rear, one of them croaking defiantly. *Exeunt omnes*; they have gone.

Just here where I am now standing you might have stood two months ago and looked upon the fairest sight you ever saw. There had been much rain, and the little stream that runs down Goodrington Valley and into Torbay had flooded the level fields up to the edge of the higher ground which encircles them at a radius of a mile on three sides, the fourth being the raised embankment which divides meadow from beach. The expanse of water lay like a deep and peaceful lake; a yard measure would have plumbed its deepest spot, yet it looked as though it might be as many fathoms in depth as it actually measured in feet. The sun was out and the day calm, so that not a ripple stirred the bright blue surface. All this was commonplace; a pretty thing that might be seen anywhere and every day. But there was a factor which idealised and glorified the scene, and that was the presence of a thousand gulls and kittiwakes. The bright, sun-kissed air pulsed with them; they moved hither and thither, and up and down, like the lights in a kaleidoscope, some fluttering over the surface, some dipping into the water and up again; others swam to and fro, seeming to chase one another. Every gull behaved as though it were a child out for a holiday; they had come to enjoy themselves and solely for that purpose: there was nothing here that a seagull would care to eat; it was not a question of food-hunting, but simply of the delight of playing in a new place and in fresh water. I have never seen the gulls so sportive by the edge of the sea, be it ever so calm, ever so full of sunshine and sparkle. As a rule they float idly upon the water or stand gravely just beyond the lap of the tide upon the sand, always, be it observed, facing the wind; or solemnly stalk hither and thither inspecting and generally rejecting potential foodstuffs. But here it was as though the very spirit of life and gaiety had infected the entire community; all seemed mad with delight and the joy of living. It was something new; a change from the dull daily round of fishing at the edge of the eternal sea, or grub-hunting in the furrows behind the ploughman in shore; that, probably, was sufficient to account for their light-hearted happiness.

It was indeed a scene of almost inconceivable loveliness. The

presence of sea-gulls always improves a picture; in this case they idealised the scene. It is a grievance to me that though the sea is scarcely more than a stone's throw from the garden wall, neither gull nor any other seabird ever visits me there to inspect the newly turned earth for worms and other delights of *terra firma*. They will follow the plough in the fields. Why do not birds know who loves and admires them? I think some do, but not gulls. To-day I had a visitor who was quite fearless.

Upon the garden path, not farther than half-a-dozen yards from my feet, there suddenly alighted a very magnificent stranger. He knew that he was magnificent, and wished me to observe the fact. He does not belong to my garden, but came to be admired. He looked for all the world like a youth strutting in a brand-new suit of clothes somewhat too stiff for comfort, but splendidly cut and fitted. A male water-wagtail in his courting dress.

'Ye gods, what a magnificent little fellow you are!' I said, the words half extorted from me by a feeling of simple admiration, and half uttered for the purpose of paying a compliment which was obviously expected of me. He heard and accepted the compliment. He bowed his head and ran along; then he paused, wagged his beautiful tail, and ran again. He did not seek for food; he had come for admiration and had found it. I had been accustomed, hitherto, to look upon the wagtail as a commonplace little person of mediocre plumage and tints that were plain and unattractive to the eye. But here—could greys and blacks and whites be more beautifully harmonised? There is not a feather in the wrong place; not one bright tint among all that shade of grey and black, yet the gaudiest of plumage could look no smarter; and certainly no brightly tinted bird could match the well-dressed appearance of this plain-coloured little creature. He looks a perfect gentleman, dressed to the nines by a master of the art, complete and convincing from top to toe.

The robin, who is, as usual, in close attendance, does not think much of him. Perhaps he is jealous. At any rate, he goes for the new arrival, who, after a momentary demonstration of resistance, stiffly takes wing and disappears. His manner of departure suggests the idea that he does not wish to spoil his clothes, and that if his collar were not so stiff and high he would have made a fight of it.

Something moves among the roots of the line of gooseberry bushes, and a tiny voice sings a soft little song—a wren; he

creeps like a mouse along the ground, keeping under cover of the gooseberry stalks, and singing all the while. This is his way of courting. A pair of sparrows come squeaking and chattering into evidence. They dart one behind the other from some tree-bough and settle for a moment on the path. Out go little Mr. Sparrow's wings at the shoulders, and he struts around his lady, both still chattering at the top of their bent. She pecks at him. 'Don't be such a ninny!' she says and flies up, he after her. He follows her like a shadow; if she turns in the air he turns at the same instant; it is as though one mind controlled both pairs of wings; they alight at the instant and fly at the instant; their unanimity is wonderful and their movements are as quick as light. This is *his* way of courting, and sufficiently trying it must be, one would think, to the lady. How many and various are the ways of courting birds! Also, how dignified and convincing are the methods of some feathered gallants—of the nightingales, for instance; how boring and uninspired must be the courtship of others, such as the pigeon! If I were a lady of this latter tribe I feel that I could never bring myself to accept the hopelessly monotonous advances of one of the lovers of my own persuasion. His incessant bowing and dead-dull conversation would work like madness on my brain, and I should beg him for Heaven's sake to be quiet and leave me alone.

Many birds seek to compel the admiration of the ladies of their kind by feats of personal valour and prowess. Capercaillies and black grouse are among these. Others are the males of certain branches of the snipe family; but, probably, the most truculent of all mating birds are the ruffs, whose spring-tournament grounds, after a night of competition for the favour of the onlooking females, the reeves, resemble a battlefield after a murderous frontal attack upon an entrenched position. These birds fight in pairs, and fight, frequently enough, to a finish. The solitary snipe is almost as deadly during his time of love mania. Should any human being be so fortunate as to 'assist' by his presence at one of these tournaments of ruff or snipe, he will not be noticed though he stand in the very centre of the lists or walk about through the lines of the combatants. I have been assured that this is so by one who has had the unique experience of seeing the wonderful sight.

What would not one give to be present at such a spectacle! It would be worth while to journey to Archangel or thereabouts to witness it, for that is where the solitaires hold their courts, and the ruffs go as far afield as the snipe for their battles.

I have seen the capercaillie in his love-throes. I have seen him hurl splendid challenges from the tops of the highest pine trees in mid-forest; but, though I have sought it often, I have never been fortunate enough to witness the unique spectacle of a crowd of these magnificent birds actually fighting it out amongst themselves upon the ground. As a matter of fact, their love rivalry seldom reaches this stage; their hectoring and challenging is more for show than real business, and only once in a way does passion rise with them to the boiling-point, resulting in a general pitched battle of male birds in some open spot in mid-forest. I have a friend who has seen this sight; I have never heard of another so fortunate. The huge birds had become excited to the frantic point; all had lost their heads and were fighting grim duels—thirty of them or more—upon the ground. They took no notice of the spectator, and they fought, some of them, to the death. Have you seen a capercaillie? He is as large as a turkey, and game to the backbone; it was a battle of giants.

Were I a bird I would rather be courted by the nightingale, soul-animating poet and divine musician that he is. We, in our Devonshire garden, though rich with many singers of the second rank, can claim no familiarity with the very highest songster of all, the *facile princeps* of feathered vocalists, the *tenore primo assoluto*, the nightingale.

You who live over the London streets may hear him more easily than I here in beautiful Devonshire, and this is a sore subject between Philomel and me, a grievance which I suppose he will never explain away, and which I feel that I can never forgive him.

But I could tell you of woods close to South Croydon Station, of a delightful combe which may be reached easily in a half-hour's stroll, where the nightingale's delicious notes fall almost unheeded upon the ear, during the month of May, by reason of the great number of these splendid singers. You may count a dozen singing at once, if you will, and if you stand in a central position. Or you may stalk one, which is easily done in the gathering gloom of night. I have done this with the Croydon nightingales, and it is one of the weirdest and most delightful experiences of my life. The theory of stalking birds in spring is this, that when engaged in his love-song the singer can hear nothing, perhaps can see as little. Select your bird, therefore, and make a start. Take yonder outlying one singing his great soul out in the darkness. If you have ever enjoyed the experience of stalking capercaillies

in the spring you will know exactly how to set about to approach this grand music-maker with the best chance of coming to close quarters. I will tell you how to do it. While you are still at some distance from him walk quietly and steadily towards him; you can do this until you are within one hundred and fifty yards or so, provided the 'going' is soft and you do not make a crackling noise as you approach, by forcing your way through a wood or over tangly undergrowth. But when you are closer in, you must begin to go carefully and to follow stalking rules. Keep hidden as much as possible by any cover there may be to hand; advance only while the song is actually proceeding; when it stops, stop also. In this way, and if you go very cautiously, you may approach, as I have done many a time, within a yard of the bird without his becoming aware of your presence. Then you may sit down, if you will, and unless you sneeze or cough, or in some other way give him information against yourself, you shall listen to such a concert as cannot be equalled in Queen's Hall or any other hall.

But, though these Croydon nightingales sing wonderfully and there is assuredly nothing to complain of in the delicious music they are ever ready, on a propitious night, to pour out unstintingly into an almost unheeding world, if one would hear the nightingale-song in absolute perfection he must go north to hear it. The birds that used to sing daylong and nightlong in a certain garden I knew and loved in Northern Russia belong to a superior class of vocalist. They have a richer note, a wider compass, and a more varied song. They are tamer, too; and you may approach one in daylight until you stand within a very few yards of the twig upon which he is sitting, yet the warbler will sing on unheeding; nay, I think he both sees and realises that you are listening, and he is glad to oblige—pleased enough to have found an appreciative admirer.

Do birds feel pride in their song? I think so. Watch a starling in full swing, busy over his springtide vocal exercises. It is a poor performance; but he thinks ever so much of it, and has not the smallest suspicion that he is making himself somewhat ridiculous. Probably his friends, and above all his lady friends, consider that he is one of the finest vocalists extant as he sits and squeezes out with immense solemnity and pertinacity his interminable strings of foolish, squeaky, beaky, unmusical notes. His one delicious whistle he thinks nothing of, though it is charming; he declares to win with the other. Then watch—by all that is weird and humorous you must watch this!—an old

male rook sitting and singing *solus* in a tree. He is pouring forth his spring-elated soul in gushing melody, so he firmly believes. His music affects him very much, and he sways and sidles on his branch as he sings, overcome with emotion. But listen to the song. Ye gods, here is a grotesque matter indeed ! Now it is like a parrot practising his word-drill ; now it is like an aged man croaking in pain ; now an elf laughing ; now an undisguised caw reminds the listener of the real identity of the performer ; now there is a series of indescribable, inimitable sounds, which are doubtless the supreme effort of the poor old croaker, and which possibly convince his listening mate that he is really a very fine fellow and a splendid singer, but which compel the listening human to end the concert through the medium of a missile, lest all the better performers in the garden be driven away to sing elsewhere. It is certainly impossible to hear their own voices while this sort of thing continues. Is that the reason for the general silence while old Maître Corbeau is on the war-path ? As a matter of fact, I believe everyone is listening, and laughing at his efforts.

Then watch those two cock chaffinches answering one another. One sings his stave and listens ; the other replies with the very same song, note for note. The first repeats his version. 'There ! you can't do it like that !' he seems to say, and listens again.

'Can't I ?' says his rival, and trolls out the self-same phrase.

Probably after a while they will approach one another, and there will be a short sharp fight, for chaffinches are quarrelsome folk ; they will fight because neither will admit that the other can sing, while each considers himself the sublimest of vocalists. It is Handel and Paganini over again.

There is a thrush which lives in a field close by whose favourite pastime it is to puzzle and baffle the Autocrat. It has learned a whistle which is for all the world like a human being calling up his dog. The Autocrat, being a person of tender age and most friendly in his attitude towards every sympathetic stranger, is as yet anxious to display his friendliness by responding to every whistle he hears. He rapidly gallops in the direction from which he believes the call to come. I am sure the thrush knows this ; for as surely as the Autocrat enters that particular field, so surely does the mischievous bird abandon every other note of his gamut in order to practise his dog whistle, to the Autocrat's daily confusion and puzzlement, and to the great and wasteful expenditure of his breath in careering hither and thither

in search of the supposed friend desirous of his company. Another thrush—one of the many in our garden—has, I suppose, at some period of his career lived within hail of a poultry run, for he uses in his daily song the most perfect imitation of a distressed chicken of tender age. He has taken me in many a time, and I feel sure that if any naturally sympathetic old hen happened to be within hearing, the piteous call would set her running hither and thither in tender anxiety for the supposed belated one.

This thrush, when he has repeated this imitation several times, has a habit of singing a delicious phrase which sounds like 'Me do it,' as though he were proud of his accomplishment and wished to impress upon one that he was the author of the feat. I have heard many variants upon this last call; most thrushes have a phrase something like it; one I know sings, 'You'll do it, you'll do it; only try, only try!' A grand fellow he is, and the bearer of an encouraging message of perseverance.

But there are limitations to one's love for this bracing preacher. He is a terrible fellow for rearing immense families of strawberry-eating fledgelings. I am prepared to feed one family per annum; it is fair payment for his delicious singing, which he gives unstinting from February to July; but when he springs a second covey upon us we are inclined to be less lavish in our praises of his splendid vocalism. The little rascals eat more than their share of the fruit. Anything we would save for ourselves must be carefully netted, and even then a daily tour of the nets is necessary in order that sundry fat little thieves may be released from the meshes in which they lie tangled and frightened to death, victims to gourmandism. If left where greed has landed them, they would inevitably fall a prey to that ogre of their tribe, Thomas the cat. Thomas has eaten one or two who have fallen thus between the devil and the deep sea, and in the foolishness of a tender heart I have been sorry rather than glad. For when all is said and done, though strawberries are good and very good, one thrush is worth all the strawberries he can eat in their short season, even though we throw a few currants and cherries into the balance with them. Garge the gardener does not think so. He would shoot or trap every bird in the garden if he were allowed. Garge thinks no more of the song of the birds than Mr. Punch's old huntsman did of the scent of flowers; this huntsman requested to be informed how any hounds could be expected to stick to the scent 'when all they stinkin' violets were in bloom.' Garge does not see how we can expect to enjoy the

fruits of the earth in their season 'with all they bawling thrushes about.'

Yet with all the breeding that goes on year by year among the bird community in the garden, there are not so very many thrushes and blackbirds. Indeed, this sweet summer season that is unfolding hour by hour to-day, began with but a couple of old pairs or so of each; where, then, are the young families that were so rampant among the fruit bushes last year? Well, I think there is an etiquette among these birds, that each pair is to be left to its own beat, and may not be disturbed. For one season each family of youngsters is allowed to feast (at my expense) in their parents' claim; at the end of it they must go elsewhere, and peg out a beat for themselves. Shall we complain or thank Heaven that the old pairs remain to sing to us and eat our fruit, and to rear ravenous fledgelings upon the increment that this red soil gives us? I think we will thank Heaven, and that heartily. I am writing at midnight; blackbirds, thrushes, the chaffinches, the robins, and all the rest of the community are silent for a very few hours; but even at this hour I can hear a little voice from the marshland below, between sea and garden; a little voice that is upraised night long and every night at this season, like a little silver bridge to join the songtide of even with the pæans of morning; it is the sedge-warbler, who can sing, I take it, a million bars without a breath, and sing them well, too! At about three or earlier the gulls will awaken the great singers; the old thrush that sits in the elm will sudden troll out his 'Oh, the jolly time! See my missus! She'll do it!'—and then, well, another day will awake, dew-eyed, and run its delicious course in the chorus of birds, the scent of roses, the shimmering warmth of the sun-kissed breath of early summer.

FRED. WHISHAW.

A, B, C.

AN American critic—Artemus Ward probably—once remarked that Chaucer was a fairly good poet but the worst ‘speler’ he had ever come across. Judged by the modern standard, Chaucer was certainly shaky in his orthography, and were he to enter now for a competitive examination his sporting friends would probably feel secure in laying long odds against his success. It may perhaps console some who share his weakness to reflect that indifferent spelling is not, or was not, incompatible with the respectable position of ‘Father of English Poetry.’ Shakespeare, again, is said to have signed his own name in thirty different ways, but it may have been that he was only practising a biliteral cipher. Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, though she apparently had no difficulty in making herself understood, used to spell after a fashion of her own; while the Young Pretender referred to his father as ‘Gems,’ and wrote of drawing a ‘sord’ or a ‘cooto de chas.’

But Chaucer is dead and things have changed. Good spelling is now an essential accomplishment. It is no longer necessary that a gentleman should know how to handle a rapier or be learned in the ‘nice conduct of a clouded cane,’ but spell he must. Orthography has risen to the rank of a virtue, and to spell badly is wicked, or at least it is vulgar, which, as we know, is worse. Moreover, the man who cannot spell is in some danger of starving, for good spelling is a necessary password to lucrative employment. The green pastures of the public service are thickly fenced about with bristling hedges of difficult words, and the narrow entrance is guarded by fierce examiners, in whose hands are dictionaries and on whose tongues are polysyllables. Few may vanquish or appease these, and a very large percentage of the failures in Civil Service examinations is said to be due to inaccurate spelling.

While, on the one hand, this state of affairs may seem to indicate some weakness in our system of national education, it may, on

the other hand, be argued that it bears evidence to the existence of national common-sense, and that weakness in spelling is, in some cases at least, due to the possession of an orderly and logical habit of thought which is revolted by the mass of absurdities which render our spelling so difficult.

Candidates for the Civil Service are not the only sufferers. Every child in the kingdom is forced to waste years in the endeavour to acquire an accomplishment which, under any rational system, might be easily mastered in a third of the time.

This waste of time is not the only objection to our orthography. It is surely desirable that any system of education should aim at creating or cultivating a perception of what is meant by 'law,' but the very rudimentary sense of law that a child possesses is at once disturbed by the discovery that symbols have no fixed value, and that the same sound may be represented in half-a-dozen different ways. All goes well so long as the reading is limited to carefully selected words in which the same sound is represented by the same letter or letters, as *gate*, *mate*, *fate*, &c. But when the child is introduced to *wait*, *weight*, *vein*, *gauge*, &c., when he finds that *th* is sometimes pronounced sharp, as in *thick*, and sometimes flat, as in *this*, that *g* is sometimes hard as in *give* and *gild*, sometimes soft as in *gin* and *gibbet*, that final consonants are sometimes doubled in inflection and sometimes not, that every rule has a long list of exceptions, and that a considerable percentage of letters in every line are practically superfluous, he is in danger of acquiring the conviction that there is no reason for anything.

The main objection urged against reform is that a change in spelling would obscure the history of words and destroy the possibility of a science of etymology; and in spite of the fact that the late Professor Max Müller, Dr. Murray, and Professor Skeat have assured us that etymology would be in no danger if our present spelling were abandoned, the objection is still put forward. Much contempt has been heaped on the American practice of dropping the *u* in *honour*, *labour*, &c., and it is triumphantly pointed out by railway-carriage orators that the *u* is a record of the derivation of the word from Latin through French. If the record were trustworthy it certainly would be of some value: but it is not. There are about forty words ending in *-our*, of which twenty are derived from Latin words in *-or* through the French word in *-eur*. On the other hand, there are at least twenty English words similarly derived, but now ending in *-or*—e.g., *emperor*, *tailor*,

error, &c. Thus the instances where the present spelling of these words would lead us to a correct estimate of the derivation are balanced, or rather outweighed, by those where the spelling would lead us astray. It may be noticed that in many of this class of words the *u* was introduced by Johnson, who thought it desirable to indicate the passage of the word through French from Latin, but failed to carry out his reform thoroughly.

Besides the words in *-our* and *-or*, there are many instances where our spelling directly suggests a false etymology. Thus *corporal* (military) has nothing to do with *corpus*; *sovereign* is not connected with *regnum*; *rhyme* is not Greek, and has no relation to *rhythm*; *scissors* is not derived from *scindo*; *island* is not connected with *isle* and *insula*; the *com-* in *comrade* is not the *com-* of *company*, *compete*, &c.; *ache*, formerly spelt *ake*, is not the Greek *ἄχος*; *cutlet* and *cutler* have nothing to do with the verb *cut*; *arbour* is not derived from *arbor*; even the *b* in *debt*, over which Archbishop Trench waxed almost sentimental, is, according to Professor Skeat, misleading, as the word comes through French from Latin. The same is probably the case with the *b* in *doubt*, the *l* in *fault*, and the *p* in *receipt*.

Not only does spelling often indicate a false etymology, but, conversely, a knowledge of the ultimate derivation of a word, so far from being a help to spelling, will in many cases lead us astray. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that a man who has a little Latin is more likely to bungle over words in *-ant* and *-ent*, *-ance* and *-ence*, than one who has none. The speller who trusts solely to his Latin fails to see why we should write *precede*, *secede*, *recede*, but *proceed*, *succeed*, and *exceed*; he can see the propriety of the *e* in *permanent*, *reticent*, &c., but is liable to go wrong in *defendant*, *tenant*, *attendant*, and *dependant*; he will understand *science*, *obedience*, and *indolence*, but be puzzled by *sustenance*, *appearance*, *sufferance*, *acceptance*, *admittance*, &c.

A modest acquaintance with Greek enables us to see the derivation of *photograph*, *philosophy*, &c. Would the derivation be entirely obscured if we wrote *fotograf*, as the Italians do? We already write *frenzy* and *fancy* without losing sight of their Greek origin, though Jeames de la Pluche was more consistent when he wrote 'only phansy.' *F* is an aspirated labial corresponding to *P*, and is quite as good a representative of the Greek *φ* as the combination *PH*. To anyone who knows the Greek alphabet, *Filippo* is quite as obviously Greek as *Philip*, and from anyone who does not know Greek the derivation is in either case hidden.

Spelling reformers may be roughly divided into two classes :

(1) Those who would retain the existing alphabet and be content with abolishing some of the more outrageous absurdities and inconsistencies of our present system, or lack of system ; (2) those who aim at a more sweeping reform, including the extension of the alphabet—so as to include fresh symbols for sounds that can now only be represented, and that very imperfectly, by combinations of letters—and the adoption of a phonetic system.

In the course of an ardent protest against phonetic spelling Archbishop Trench urged that confusion would arise between words sounded alike but spelt differently, as *pier*, *peer* ; *vein*, *vain* ; *rein*, *reign*, &c. But surely this objection is of the very slightest weight ; under the present system of spelling there are about 600 pairs of words, not only sounded, but spelt alike, yet it cannot be seriously maintained that any practical difficulty arises from this cause. We do not, as a matter of fact, ever mistake a box on the ear for a box at the opera, or confound the cricket on the hearth with a match at the Oval. There are, as it is, several meanings to the word *sole*. Let us suppose that the word 'soul' is reduced to the same form, so that we should write—

And froze the genial current of the sole ;

would there be any practical risk of the reader's inferring that the rude forefathers of the hamlet suffered from chilblains ?

There are, however, some objections to a purely phonetic system to which some weight must be allowed. In the first place, there are the practical difficulties which must attend its introduction and adoption. Secondly, the pronunciation of many words is by no means uniform at any given time, and any spelling that might be adopted would in the case of such words only represent the pronunciation of a certain class or locality. To this objection the obvious answer is that the pronunciation indicated would be that usually prevalent among educated people, and that such partial correspondence between spelling and pronunciation might be better than none at all. Thirdly, pronunciation is constantly shifting, and the spelling adopted would soon cease to be phonetic. To this it may be replied that, even as things are, spelling is liable to change ; we do not now spell as Milton and Addison, or even as Johnson did ; and the advocates of phonetic spelling would simply demand the substitution of a periodical and systematic revision for a series of gradual and haphazard changes.

The root-and-branch scheme of reform had the hearty support

of the man whose name is a tower of strength in all that concerns language—viz., Max Müller; but it is evident that the less ambitious project would have a better chance of being realised. It should surely be possible to do away with some of the more obvious inconsistencies in our present method of spelling. It would probably be considered too sweeping a change to reduce to uniformity the 800 words ending in *-ible* and *-able* (including such specimens as *tenable*, *movable*, &c.), the 650 in *-ant* and *-ent*, and the 420 in *-ance* and *-ence*, though it is doubtful whether the change would involve any serious loss to etymological science. But we might at least get rid of such absurdities as the following: *Precede*, *proceed*; *secede*, *succeed*; *perilous*, *marvellous*; *defence*, *defensive*; *offence*, *offensive*; *welfare*, *farewell*; *fill*, *full*, *fulfil*; *till*, *until*; *invoke*, *invocation*; *deferring*, *deferable*; *deign*, *disdain*; *piteous*, *furious*; *deceit*, *receipt*; *enrol*, *unroll*; *principal*, *principle*; *repeat*, *compete*; *repair*, *compare*; *galloping*, *worshipping*; *practice*, *practise*; *prophecy*, *prophesy*. (N.B.—There are many hundreds of words used both as noun and as verb without any confusion, e.g. *drink*, *blow*, *dance*, *call*, &c., &c.) We have no Academy in England to settle such matters, but a combination of a dozen daring publishers with a few sympathising editors could effect a considerable reform in a few years.

FRANK RITCHIE.

A Deed of Gift.

‘**A** LADY to see you, sir; Miss Barry.’
 ‘Miss Barry? Ask her in at once.’

Bernard Warburton rose with alacrity, for as a lawyer and a man he was interested in the new arrival. She came in handsomely dressed in deep mourning, so slim and graceful that she looked taller than she really was; she had a pale, well-featured face, and blue Irish eyes, which flatly contradicted the set coldness of every line.

Sometimes, in these professional interviews, it is the lady who is emotional, whilst her adviser remains chilly; on this occasion the visitor bowed formally, and save for the grace of her action it might have been a doll saluting another doll, so blank was her face and changeless. He, on the contrary, dropped officiality and advanced with outstretched hand.

‘I think, as we are relatives, we should shake hands.’

Courtesy constrained her to follow his lead, but he thought he had rarely touched so passive a hand; but she was quick in repudiating his claim.

‘We can hardly be related—except merely by marriage.’

‘Precisely, but that means a good deal. I am glad to see you. The title-deeds of your little estate are ready and waiting.’

He spoke smilingly, for her quaint speech had amused him, but her next words took him aback. Like other sensible men, he had a horror of women without common-sense.

‘I came to say that I want neither title-deeds nor the estate; I have no use for them.’

Sheer amazement kept him dumb, but he looked keenly to see if she was hysterical or out of her mind. Scrutinise as he might, however, he could only see steady purpose underneath her white earnestness.

‘But this is sheer nonsense. Narn is left you unconditionally

by your grandfather, with the sole exception that you are to take his name; no difficulty about that, is there?’

‘There is every difficulty; even the name is hateful to me.’

Her breathing quickened, but she spoke calmly as before.

‘The name is also mine,’ he answered curtly, and because of her gentle instincts a touch of sensitive colour came and went.

‘I beg your pardon, I should have remembered better.’

He considered her again attentively, trying to reckon up this unknown quantity.

‘She has a quick Irish temper—a warm Irish heart. What does she mean by sitting there like a little icicle trying to lead me astray? There must be something behind all this absurdity, and I must get at it.’ Having decided this, he dropped the relative and assumed the man of law.

‘Being in temporary charge of Narn, I must ask your reasons for this unprecedented conduct?’

He was judicial enough for a bag wig, but, having nothing to hide, she was not dismayed.

‘I can tell you in a few sentences. A few months ago my mother was living—she is dead now; for years we had both been battling against the poverty which killed her by inches—not a doubt about it, for she died of want of proper food—of necessary warmth and the lack of all comfort. She had to work almost to the last, and when I wrote to her father telling him of our distress he left the letter unanswered because my mother had married a poor Irish gentleman. If Narn had been ours eight months ago she would have been living now. If the owner of it had only held out a helping hand, I should not be broken-hearted for the loss of her as I am to-day.’

He knew now the sort of apathy that had so dulled her; it was heart-break, as she had said, and it was only the intensity of her emotion which kept her low voice from faltering. He was genuinely touched, but at his awkwardest in expressing this.

‘How did you and your mother live?’

‘She did art needlework—she starved on it. I painted, and often went hungry to bed. I did not mind, being young and strong, but she—my God! to watch the slow drowning of the one you love best on earth—to see her sinking day by day for want of the sheer necessities of life, yet with sweet patience and smiling lips. I would have died to save her, but neither my death nor my life could do that. You must pardon me that I cannot speak of these things without—they choke me.’

The window was open, and, going to it, she stood for a few moments looking out; then she returned quietly to her seat. He was not without regret that her story had come to his knowledge too late; he would like to have saved this girl's mother from going under, and it would have been so easy, for his own father had been a saving man, and the son was able to keep good hunters without crippling his estate.

But there was still the girl, and he looked critically at her handsome dress; it looked new, so perhaps he guessed that it had been purchased with a view to this particular interview. People do not come threadbare to repudiate property.

'I am extremely sorry to hear this; I wish I had known it earlier. As regards your refusal of Narn, I am more in the dark than ever.'

This was not so true as it sounded, but she was urged to full confession.

'Now it is too late, the tide has turned. I have pupils to teach and orders to execute; it means hard work, and for that I am thankful.'

'But you might work hard at Narn; I could not imagine any place better suited to an artist. It is only a few miles away: may I not take you to see it?'

'Never! it is enough to be there in dreams, as I so often am. In those dreams she is not dead but living—coming back to health and strength in the old house that I shall never see. To go there without her, and to remember in it the want in which she died, would be too bitter; I could not bear it.'

'And yet the place is worth a visit. At this time of year the little valley below Narn is all gold, and a tiny river threads it like silver.'

'I have no further need of gold, and the river would only flash my own loneliness back to me.'

'Narn stands high and sees the sun long after the valley has bid it good-night.'

'The Narn sun would only dazzle my eyes until they ached; I should be longing for the night.'

'There is a rose garden nestled into the shelter of the hill; the cottage is covered with roses too, so that you may gather them from the open window.'

'These things are not for me; don't you see that to work for my daily bread is the only solace left me? If I once dropped the threads I should never pick them up again.'

Now he knew well enough that there was method in her madness, and that hard, necessary work might be the only tonic for her state. But there was Narn, and he was a lawyer and not an artist, although he had tried to speak her language.

'Then what do you intend doing—I must warn you that any property, however small, brings some responsibility with it?'

'I know; that is why I am here to-day. There is seed-time and harvest that must not be neglected. I know nothing about these things, but you do; and you are next of kin, although remotely so.'

A sudden light flashed into his face, which might have been greed, for much can easily do with more. He had certainly no wish to see Narn thrown away by the folly of a girl.

'I am the next of kin; do you think of giving Narn to me?'

For the first time he saw a flicker of satisfaction in her face, as though a troublesome business were nearly disposed of.

'Yes; I should like you to have it. I want you to draw out a deed of gift, so that I can sign it before I go away.'

He bowed with inscrutable gravity, and, taking a huge folio, scratched away upon it with a quill-pen at some length. When his scribing was finished, he found her at his elbow, eager to sign and have done with it.

'Before you sign it, Miss Barry, let me warn you that you are doing an extremely foolish thing.'

She shook her head, and, taking up the pen, was about to sign, when she noticed an omission.

'It ought to be over a stamp, surely. Did you forget?'

'It will be just as legal,' he answered; 'but you shall have your stamp.'

He produced a penny one, and then affixed by its red tape a clumsy waxen seal, which had an imposing effect. In all good faith she was about to sign for the second time, when another serious omission occurred to her.

'There should be witnesses, surely?'

Her manner rebuked him for his singularly unbusinesslike habits; nor was she without an innocent vanity in knowing so well what ought to be done.

'You would prefer a witness? You shall have one.'

So he called in his head clerk, who stared agape at the strange document, with its penny stamp and dangling seal. On being asked to witness the lady's signature, he was about to make some sort of expostulation, when he was silenced by an imperative

gesture from his employer. So Miss Barry wrote boldly across the Queen's countenance, and the head clerk witnessed with as much professional dignity as sheer amazement left at his disposal.

'Is one witness sufficient?' she asked doubtfully.

'Amplly sufficient. Thank you, Simpson; that is all I want.'

So Simpson retired helplessly, while Warburton, producing a formidable bunch of keys, opened the iron safe and deposited the deed of gift within. As he clanged the door to sharply, he saw that she was duly impressed with his stern custody of an important document. The mere rattling of his keys suggested severe jailing, and she was satisfied with her part. Apparently he was satisfied too, only his manner changed, and, for one who was popularly accredited with being a gentleman, he became somewhat bullying.

'Now that the thing is irrevocably done, I am going to give you advice gratis. You have a fatal habit of believing in people. I warn you against this. Here, of course, you have walked obligingly into the jaws of the wolf, and he has snapped you up. It's nothing to me now, so I can warn you not to let other wolves do it.'

'But you did your best to dissuade me from it. No real wolf would have done that.'

'It is evident that you do not know much about them. There is an old proverb about going to Saltash backwards; and I was dealing with a woman. You understand? I should have been a fool not to annex property when I had merely to draft out a deed and expend a penny stamp.'

His change of manner perplexed her, but she had a latent confidence in him that would not easily take fright.

'But, as you said, every property brings its own trouble. You will have to cultivate the land, and be kind to the cottagers who work for you.'

He gave a hard, short laugh, as though her simplicity began to be irritating.

'You must not be kind to those sort of people. They encroach at once and take liberties. But, at least, under my management they shall pay their rent; I promise you that. Give me your address, please; I may have occasion to write or see you about certain things.'

So, having disencumbered herself of those things which make for ease of body and sloth of mind, Nora Barry went back to the

battle of life. She had need to fight it strenuously, and so get ease for her heartache and partial forgetfulness of those happy things which might have been had a hard, unforgiving old man died a few months earlier.

From a worldly point of view she had acted disastrously, and yet, after all, she had known what was best for herself; and in fighting and overcoming difficulties the keenness and zest of youth came back to her. Through pressing forward in so eager a race, she slowly overtook the shadows and passed beyond them into the cheerful sunlight. Bernard Warburton, who always saw her when he was in town, noticed the gradual brightening of her eyes, and perhaps vanity suggested that he himself had something to do with this happy change. At any rate, he was very cousinly attentive, and she frankly appreciated his society, for he was a man of parts and art was no dead letter to him.

Sometimes—but not often—she would let him take her here or there, and those rare holidays were very pleasant to her. She wondered that a man without sisters could make himself so companionable, and on one subject only did they seem to strike a discordant note. Whenever they talked about business or of Narn, he seemed to change at once into a hard, money-loving man. So striking was this that she rarely mentioned either, leaving it to him to come out occasionally with a sentiment only worthy of old Scrooge or a man who found pleasure and profit in grinding the faces of the poor.

In spite of her faith in him she would wince then, although putting it all down to the hard facts of legal training. She did not believe in his hard sayings until one bitter day when she could not help herself; he convicted himself out of his own mouth—and perhaps no other kind of evidence could have convinced her.

Her small suburban room looked very cramped that May morning, and he made mention of the primroses that he had left behind him in the country.

‘The primroses! Ah! I remember how they used to grow in Ireland when I was a little girl.’

She looked dreamily beyond the bricks and mortar as she spoke, and he wondered if she ever regretted Narn. Quite suddenly he struck the discordant note.

‘I suppose primroses are not bad in their way, but the country is not Arcadia after all. The bailiff of that wretched little Narn—you are well quit of it—has been spreading reports that I have

no real right to the place. I have not been able to bring it home to him, but I've saved him seven-and-sixpence by shooting his dog.'

She came back from her primrose memories with a most painful shock; the bad taste of his joke set her teeth on edge.

'You did it—by accident of course?'

'By accident! I never aimed more carefully in my life. I do not say that I would have done it if I had liked the dog, but it was an ugly ill-conditioned cur.'

It was impossible to doubt that he spoke the truth, and for her the light of the May day went suddenly out.

'But the dog was not yours—he may have loved it—may have thought there was no dog in the world like it. Oh! I could not have believed that.'

So keenly did disillusion sting her that words failed. He shrugged his shoulders as one who had little patience with sentimental folly.

'It is quite as well you gave up Narn; they would have fleeced you right and left. Only the other day I had to distrain upon an old widow's pig; it is not pleasant, but rent must be paid.'

This time she regarded him with real horror, and the quick Irish temper of which he had suspected the existence on their first meeting blazed up into her face.

'Do you mean to say that you actually *robbed* a poor old woman of her pig.'

'Robbed, nonsense! The old humbug could not pay her rent—or would not—the one more likely than the other, so I made six-and-eightpence a score—not a bad price for a good bacon pig.'

There was a pause, and then she spoke at a white heat of sorrowful indignation: 'You shall give me back Narn. I see you are not fit to have any sort of power!'

'Give you back Narn?' he answered scornfully. 'What! rob myself of what is legally mine? Remember the stamp across which you signed. Remember Simpson, a witness of full age and well acquainted with the nature of an oath?'

'I doubt if the stamp means anything. I have thought since that it ought to have been quite another sort of stamp.'

He had to laugh outright—he could not help himself; and to her the laugh sounded mocking and insolent.

'What about the great waxen seal with its red tape? How do you propose to get over that?'

'I don't know now—it is all so cruelly sudden; but that deed shall be annulled if there is law in England!'

'There is, and I am one of its most able expounders. I warn you that no judge in the kingdom would venture to negative the binding powers of seal and stamp. Then, again, if you recovered Narn you would still have to assume the hated name.'

'I would do anything,' she returned passionately, 'to prevent your merciless hand from oppressing the weak. And to think that it is I who have delivered them over to you.'

He flushed uneasily and then went on in the same mocking way:

'There is one action you could take that might pave the way to annulling the deed—mind you, I do not promise that it would—but to do this you would have to swear that black was white before a clergyman.'

'You are trading on my ignorance; if you mean anything you mean a magistrate. People do not swear before clergymen.'

'I happen to know what I am speaking about and I mean a clergyman. See! it is done like this—having your hand I repeat this oath, "I, Bernard, take thee, Nora," and you answer——'

With burning indignation she wrenched her hand from his.

'I answer! do you think anything on this earth could make me promise to love and honour—a *wolf*! And to think I believed in you so utterly as a good man.'

'And so you will again when you are are a better woman of business and understand that you must either bite or get bitten. I suppose under the tragic circumstances you will come and inspect Narn?'

'I am going there to-morrow, and then I shall consult the ablest lawyer in England.'

He bowed sarcastically.

'You do me too much honour; then I shall expect you. But remember, a dog—or wolf if you prefer it—does not readily give up a bone that has been once given him.'

He met her at the station, and although she shrank painfully and visibly from the companionship of this sordid man, there seemed no other means of travelling the necessary miles save by his side; for Narn, peaceful little Narn, nestled away amongst its hills, knew nothing of such restless things as trains. At first they had to follow the silver thread of the river as it wound its way through the exquisite valley—such a tiny sparkling river,

more like a brook as it babbled and prattled its laughing way through its primrose banks. Cuckoos singing against each other grew hysterical in emulation as to which should have the last liquid word; the woodpigeons, too, had plenty to say, but in a lower, more wooing key, so that the harmony of the woods remained perfect.

The earth new born, so fresh and tender and exquisite, had an influence hard to resist, but Nora, mindful of her sad errand, could only look on wistfully as one who had no part in these delights. He was just as silent as she—feeling perhaps at last the ungraciousness of his position. Once or twice she looked at him as though trying to accustom herself to his new character, and the last time he noticed it.

‘I am sorry, Miss Barry; but you know the fate of foolish Red Riding Hoods?’

She winced back from his hardness, and nothing more was said until they had left the valley below them and were almost on the brow of the hill.

Then he turned his horse into a gateway, and the quiet beauty of the place made her forget her silence.

‘Whose house is this?’

‘Mine,’ he answered curtly. ‘If you will come in for a moment we will do the rest on foot. As we are to visit the injured widow Morris, I may as well take her the receipt for her rent.’

She did not cross his threshold willingly, but, having done so, she would have been no artist if an interior so rich in oak carving—so quaintly fashioned and adorned with the grace of a day that is fled—had not appealed to her strongly. The place was neither stately nor grand, but just homely in the best and most delicious sense of the word, and no ideal of hers could have improved upon it.

But she forgot art on approaching the window, from which the ground fell softly away into the smiling valley. The west wind greeting her was as though it had been wafted across violet beds, and the white lilac showed delicately against the vividness of crimson may. But the humming, happy bees had richer spoil than either, knowing just where the sweet peas could peep over the sheltering wall, and they were many coloured as Joseph’s coat.

So for a few merciful moments she forgot everything save the beauty with which she was surrounded, and in those moments Narn—peaceful, happy little Narn—stole into her heart for ever

and nestled there just as it nestled into the warm protecting hills. At his brusque summons she turned heavily away.

'Is it possible that you can live here—here, where everything seems to preach the love of God—and yet have so hard a heart towards His poor? I wonder how many gentle kindly souls have moved about this house; I should think there must be many footprints of angels.'

She looked for no answer. What could he know about such gentle visitants? And together they passed into fields that were fields of flowers.

In amongst the mowing grass—almost ready for the reapers—the great white daisies stood thickly, and over the higher ground, where the young corn was springing vigorously up, hovered larks singing gloriously.

In the grazing meadows, where the grass was fed down industriously by deeply contented cattle, great dazzling patches of bluebells reflected the cloudless sky. The whole scene was pure poetry; but they discovered prose at the very heart of the idyll in the shape of a bluff yeoman who seemed hardly able to take his eyes off one of the animals which munched so happily near him.

With an effort he wrenched away his eyes to pass the time of day, and then they returned lovingly to the object of his admiration.

'Marnen, sir; you be come just lucky to see the last of the bullick. I'll warrant you'll not see a finer butcher beast in the whole market.'

He gave a poke here and a prod there, to show the animal's unlimited capacities for beef, and his employer looked critically on.

'It is a very fair bullock—very fair indeed. You remember, Warren, you thought it would not fatten on that sort of cake, but I knew better?'

The bailiff gave a grudging assent.

'I'd always been used to the other, and some cattle is like some folks. No matter what you do or what you don't do, they will fatten to spite you.'

'Have you got another dog yet?'

Warren shook his head sorrowfully.

'No, I aint, sir. I've had the refusal of many, but one to match what I've lost is hard to come by. I s'pose you wouldn't believe that I miss it almost like a child, and sometimes o' nights I zim I hear it scratching at t' dairy door.'

There were almost tears in the man's eyes, and after leaving him Nora turned scathingly upon her companion.

'Of course he cannot know how cruel you have been, or he would not speak so nicely to you?'

'Why did you not ask him? He was there to speak for himself? As to speaking nicely, he must do that to my face, whatever he does behind my back; he has a wife and family.'

By this time they had crossed the stile, and were in the little hamlet of about half-a-dozen cottages.

Even to a prejudiced eye they looked comfortable dwellings, and there was evidently a friendly rivalry between the cottagers as to whom the most dazzling garden should belong to. The owner of this apparent prosperity may have been a skinflint—nay, he was on his own showing—but the women and the children seemed very anxious to propitiate their hard landlord by coming out of their cottages to do the honours of the place with smiles and friendly words.

Nora could not understand this until she decided that they were afraid of him, and had inexorable rent-day in their scared minds. Be this as it may, they were extremely voluble—as frightened women often are—and he answered them back in a neighbourly way that might have deceived the most acute.

Mrs. Morris's cottage was the last one of all, and before they reached it a stout figure showed itself at the gate with a welcoming face wreathed and dimpled with smiles.

'Come in—come in, sir; you and the young lady. You hev'nt a horse to mind thease marnen?'

Lost in wonder, Nora studied this persecuted widow, while Warburton answered her as cordially as she herself had spoken.

'Not to-day, thank you, Mrs. Morris; I merely called to bring you the money for your pig.'

'Thank you, sir; I'm sure I'm turr'ble grateful to you; and the bit of money for the rent—you've kept that back, I hope?'

'Yes. You asked me to, if you remember?'

'Ess, for sure I did.' Then she turned to Nora to politely include her in the conversation. 'Mr. Warburton knows me well enough; he never presses for my bit of rent money, knowing that I'll pay it just as soon as I can, don't you, sir?'

He nodded. 'We are old friends, Mrs. Morris, and understand each other.'

Mrs. Morris corroborated this with vigour.

'And that's just what I said to the pork-butcher when he

came and offered four-and-sixpence a score for as good a bacon pig as ever ate victuals. I let 'un have it sharp for coming to best a widow wumman—and he a bachelor man without let or hindrance. “Pigs is cheap, missus,” he do say, and I answers back, “Cheap! they be better than cheap when they come to be gived away with the worth of two sacks of meal. You can folly on your cheating ways, and I can take my pig to a better market. Mr. Warburton won’t stand by and see me bested by such trashy volk as you.” Oh, I did say all that and worser, too, till he couldn’t bid no longer, but were fo’ced to whip up and be gone.’

Her merry old eyes twinkled over the rout of the pork-butcher, and then a newer interest prevailed as she looked at Nora.

‘And is this the young lady you’ve told me about?’

‘Yes, she has come to look at her property; I think Narn will no longer have an absentee landlady. She is beginning to understand us country folk better.’

‘Ah, she do look as though she needed Narn air to set her up. Come in, my dear, do’ee now; you be all of a shake-like.’

Nora shook her head, and, taking the kind old hand, pressed it warmly before going silently on her way. She could not trust her voice, but already her heart was singing as joyously as the larks, and the veil fell away from the sun. It is much, so much to the idealist to have a hero returned to his pedestal; especially when that eminence is higher than ever. Presently Warburton overtook her, and face and voice were full of a tender laughter.

‘About the dog? I do not understand——’

‘The dog went dangerously mad; if I had not fortunately shot it the thing would have bitten Warren’s child. That you should think so hardly of me, Nora, even on my own showing! Well, we have successfully annulled the powers of that binding stamp—that rampant seal; there remains only the difficulty of the name. You remember that we were to stand so, before a clergyman, and that I should say “I, Bernard, take thee, Nora,” and that you were to answer—but I must not dictate to the mistress of Narn! What will you answer, my sweetest of distant relatives?’

She thought about it a moment, and then put her hand trustingly into his.

‘You shall go on dictating; you have a better command of words.’

ELLEN ADA SMITH.

Bacteria and Ice.

THE fate of bacteria when frozen excited the curiosity of investigators already in the early years of bacteriology, for in 1871 we find Burdon Sanderson recording the fact that water which he had obtained from the purest ice contained microzymes, or, as we now prefer to call them, micro-organisms.

It is quite possible that at the time this announcement was made it may have been received with some scepticism, for it was undoubtedly difficult to believe that such minute and primitive forms of vegetable life, seemingly so scantily equipped for the struggle for existence, should be able to withstand conditions to which vegetable life in more exalted circles so frequently and lamentably succumbs.

The tormented agriculturist realises only too well what havoc is followed by a return in May to that season

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail.

Again with what solicitude those of us who have gardens wait to see what will have survived the iron grip of winter in our favourite flower borders, and how frequently we have to face blanks in the ranks of some of its most cherished occupants. Numerous bacteriologists, however, have now confirmed this fact, the fields of ice and snow have been repeatedly explored for micro-organisms, and it has been shown how even the ice on the summit of Mont Blanc has its complement of bacterial flora, that hailstones as they descend upon the earth contain bacteria, that snow, the emblem of purity, is but a whited sepulchre, and will on demand deliver up its bacterial hosts. Quite apart from its general scientific interest, the bacterial occupation of ice is of importance from a hygienic point of view, and a large number of

examinations of ice as supplied for consumption have been made. Thus Professor Fraenkl, and also Dr. Heyroth, has submitted the ice supply of the city of Berlin to an exhaustive bacteriological examination. These investigations showed that the bacterial population of ice as supplied to Berlin is a very variable one, and fluctuates between great extremes, rising to as many as 25,000 bacteria in a cubic centimetre (about twenty drops) of ice-water, and falling to as few as two in the same measure.

There are numerous circumstances which come into play in determining the density of the bacterial population in ice. First, of course, the initial quality of the water from which the ice is derived is a factor of great importance, for the purer the water the fewer will be the bacteria found in the resulting ice.

Again, if the ice field is wind-swept by air bearing an unduly rich complement of bacteria, as may be expected in the vicinity of populous cities, for example, then the ice will reflect in its bacterial contents the undesirable neighbourhood in which it was produced. Water in repose, again, yields purer ice than water in movement during freezing, for during rest opportunity is given for the bacteria present in suspension to subside, the process of sedimentation or deposition of bacteria which takes place under these conditions playing an important part in water-purification; when, however, the water is disturbed by swift currents, or agitated by storms, this process is interrupted, and the bacteria become entangled in the ice and frozen *in situ*.

The importance attaching to the physical conditions under which ice is produced in enabling an estimate to be formed of the safety or otherwise of the same for consumption may be gathered from the following extract from an American report on the subject: 'On the whole it is evident that the conditions surrounding water when it freezes are very important factors in determining the purity of the ice formed. If there is a considerable depth of water in portions of a somewhat polluted pond or river, and the ice is formed in these portions in comparatively quiet water with but little matter in suspension, this ice will probably be entirely satisfactory for domestic use. On the other hand, ice formed in shallow portions of such ponds or rivers, even during still weather, or in any portion if there is a considerable movement of the water by currents or wind while it is forming, may be rendered by these conditions entirely unfit for domestic use.'

We have learnt that ice contains bacteria, that its bacterial contents are to a certain extent dependent upon the bacterial

quality of the water before crystallisation, and that an important factor in determining its purity is afforded by the physical conditions prevailing at the time of freezing.

It will be of interest to ascertain in more detail what effect the process of freezing has upon the number of bacteria present in the water—what is the degree of bacterial purification effected during the conversion of water into ice.

Now Professor Uffreduzzi, in his investigations on the ice-supply of Turin, part of which is derived from a much-polluted portion of the river Dora, found that about 90 per cent. less bacteria were present in the ice than were present in the water from which it was produced. In the making of ice, therefore, a remarkable removal of bacteria may be effected which approaches very nearly the degree of bacterial purification which is achieved during the best-conducted sand-filtration of water.

Uffreduzzi's results have been repeatedly confirmed by other researches. Thus, in regard to ice obtained from the river Merri-mac; water which contained originally about 38,600 bacteria per cubic centimetre, on its conversion into ice had only from three to six. Sewage, again, containing about a million and a half bacteria per cubic centimetre after being frozen only contained under 74,000. It should be mentioned that this last figure represented the number of bacteria obtained by thawing the *outside* of the sewage ice-cake; *inside* the cake there were more found—about 121,000. The difference in these figures is due to the fact that, whereas the outer layers of ice looked quite clear, towards the centre the ice contained sewage sludge and hence more bacteria had become arrested; but in spite of this the bacterial purification effected is very striking, although not sufficient to render the use of ice from such a polluted source either palatable or desirable.

It is, of course, a well-known fact that water possesses the power of purifying itself during its transformation into ice, and that the process of crystallisation not only prevents a considerable proportion of the matters in suspension from becoming embodied in the ice, but also eliminates a large percentage of the matters in solution, the latter being driven from the water which is being frozen into the water beneath. If, therefore, ice in the act of forming can get rid of matters in solution, it is not difficult to understand how it can eject bacteria, which though so minute are yet bodies of appreciable dimension and in suspension. But that there are limits to this power of excluding bacteria, and that, as

in the case of other mechanical processes, an overtaking of the available resources is at once reflected in the inferiority of the product, is shown by the frozen sewage experiment, in which the ice, having had too large a supply of bacteria in the first instance to deal with, was unable to get rid of more than a certain proportion, and was obliged to retain a very considerable number. Hence great as is the degree of purification achieved by ice in forming, yet it must be recognised that its powers in this direction are limited, and that the fact of water being frozen does not necessarily convert a bad water into immaculate ice.

It is worthy of note that the city of Lawrence in Massachusetts obtains the greater portion of its ice from a river which in its raw unpurified condition was rejected for purposes of water supply, in consequence of the numerous and severe epidemics of typhoid fever which accompanied its use. Since the application of sand-filtration to this water, however, the death rate from typhoid in this city, instead of being abnormally high, has fallen abnormally low, and this improvement is attributed to the excellent quality of the water supplied to the city, and has taken place despite the use which still continues of ice from the polluted river. The authorities consider the city's immunity from typhoid amply justifies their sanctioning the distribution of this river-ice, the freezing of the water having rendered it sufficiently pure to remove all danger to health from its consumption.

So far we have been considering the effect on bacteria of freezing carried on under more or less natural conditions; but much interesting work of a more detailed character has been carried out with reference to the behaviour of particular varieties of micro-organisms when frozen under more or less artificial conditions.

Thus Dr. Prudden froze various bacteria in water at temperatures ranging from -1° C. to -10° C., and he found that different varieties were very differently affected by this treatment; that, for example, a bacillus originally obtained from water, and introduced in such numbers as represented by 800,000 individuals being present in every twenty drops, after four days' freezing had entirely disappeared, not one having survived. On the other hand, similar experiments in which the typhoid bacillus was used resulted in the latter not only enduring a freezing of four days' duration, but emerging triumphant after it had been carried on for more than 103 days!

In these experiments it should be borne in mind that, as the ice was frozen to a solid block or lump, there was no opportunity for the mechanical committal of the bacteria during freezing to the water beneath; all the bacteria present were imprisoned in the ice, and the fact that the typhoid bacteria were not destroyed by being frozen shows that they can withstand exposure to such low temperatures, although, as we have seen, the other variety of bacillus employed was destroyed.

Dr. Prudden, however, discovered an ingenious method by which even typhoid bacilli were compelled to succumb when frozen. In the course of his investigations he found that bacteria which had offered the stoutest resistance under freezing were extremely sensitive to this treatment if the process was carried on intermittently, or, in other words, if the temperature surrounding them was alternately lowered and raised.

In this manner the bacteria may be said to be subjected to a succession of cold shocks, instead of being permitted to remain in a continuously benumbed condition. The vitality of typhoid bacilli was put to the test under these circumstances, the freezing process being carried on over twenty-four hours, during which time, however, it was three times interrupted by the ice being thawed. The effect on the typhoid bacteria was striking in the extreme; from there being about 40,000 present in every twenty drops, representing the number originally put into the water, there were only ninety at the end of the twenty-four hours; and after a further period of three days, during which this treatment was repeated, not a single bacillus could be found. This signal surrender to scientific tactics forms a marked contrast to the stout resistance maintained for over 103 days under the ordinary methods of attack.

But, although the typhoid bacillus appears to submit and meekly succumb to this plan of campaign, yet the conclusion must not be rashly drawn that all descriptions of bacteria will be equally feeble and helpless in these circumstances.

Doctors Percy Frankland and Templeman have shown that the spore form of the anthrax bacillus is able to successfully challenge all such attempts upon its vitality. Thus when put into water and frozen at a temperature of -20°C. , the process being spread over a period of three months and interrupted no fewer than twenty-nine times by thawings, when examined even after this severe series of shocks, it showed no signs of submission and clung to life as tenaciously as ever.

The more sensitive form of anthrax, however, the bacillus, was readily destroyed; for after one freezing its numbers were already so much reduced that it was only with difficulty that even one or two could be found, and after the second freezing every one out of the large number originally present had died.

Renewed interest has been of late revived in the question of the behaviour of bacteria at low temperatures, in consequence of the possibility of obtaining, by means of liquid air and liquid hydrogen, degrees of cold which were undreamt of by the scientific philosophers of fifty years ago. Public interest has also been quickened in such inquiries on account of the important part which low temperatures play in many great commercial developments, their application rendering possible the transport from and to all parts of the world of valuable but perishable foodstuffs, thus encouraging local industries by opening up markets, and bringing prosperity to countries and communities which before were seeking in vain an outlet for their surplus produce.

The application of cold storage for preservation purposes is, however, no novelty; for nature, ages ago, set us the example, and of this we have been lately reminded afresh by the discovery announced by Dr. Herz of a mammoth in Siberia, which, despite the thousands of years which have elapsed since it was originally overwhelmed and frozen, is described as being in a marvellous state of preservation.

Thus we are told that 'most of the hair on the body had been scraped away by ice, but its mane and near foreleg were in perfect preservation, and covered with long hair. The hair of the mane was from four to five inches long, and of a yellowish-brown colour, while its left leg was covered with black hair. In its stomach was found a quantity of undigested food, and on its tongue was the herbage which it had been eating when it died. This was quite green.'

Considering that certainly more than eight thousand years have elapsed since this creature was peacefully consuming what proved to be its last meal, nature's method of cold storage must indeed be regarded as unsurpassable in the excellence of its results.

I believe it was in the year 1884 that the first attempts were made to follow more closely and in greater detail the precise effect upon different bacteria of submitting them to temperatures of such a low degree as -130° C., obtained by means of solid carbonic acid. These experiments were carried out by Pictet and

Young, and are recorded in the *Comptes Rendus* of the Paris Academy of Sciences.

They differ from those which we have so far been considering, inasmuch as the bacteria were not frozen in water but in culture-material, or, in other words, like the mammoth, whilst enjoying a midday meal!

One of the micro-organisms experimented with was a bacillus known at that time as the rinderpest bacillus, capable of producing disease in animals when inoculated into them and existing both in the spore and bacillar form. Pictet and Young specially state that the spore form was present in the specimens employed by them, and hence the fact that this micro-organism was alive after being frozen and exposed to this low temperature of -130°C . for the space of twenty hours is not perhaps so surprising when we bear in mind the remarkable feats of endurance exhibited by spores, which have with justification obtained for them a prominent place amongst the so-called curiosities of bacteriology. But of more interest than their mere survival in these circumstances is the fact that, on being restored to animation—or, in other words, released from their ice-prison—these bacteria were discovered to have retained all their pathogenic properties, this period of enforced rigidity having in no way affected their disease-producing powers.

Such results naturally only served to whet the scientific appetite for more, and the liquefaction of air and of hydrogen placing much lower temperatures at the disposal of investigators, those bacteriologists who were fortunate enough to command a supply were not long in availing themselves of the opportunity thus given them of further testing the vitality of micro-organisms.

Botanists had already shown that exposure to liquid air, which means a temperature of about -190°C ., and to liquid hydrogen, which means a temperature of about -250°C ., did not impair the germination powers of various descriptions of seeds, such as those of musk, wheat, barley, peas, vegetable marrow, and mustard, and that their actual immersion in liquid hydrogen for the space of six hours did not prevent them coming up when sown just as well as ordinary seeds which had not undergone this unique experience; hence the opportunity of submitting other members of the vegetable kingdom to these low temperatures was eagerly sought for by bacteriologists. Dr. Macfadyen found this opportunity in the laboratories of the Royal Institution, and, Professor Dewar

having placed a generous supply of liquid air and liquid hydrogen at his disposal, he submitted specimens growing in various culture-materials, such as gelatin, broth, potatoes, &c., of typhoid, diphtheria, cholera, anthrax with spores, and other bacteria, for twenty hours and seven days respectively, to a temperature of about -190° C. In no instance, however, whether exposed when growing in fluid or solid media, could any impairment of their vitality or the slightest alteration in their structure be observed. Similar results were obtained when liquid hydrogen, or a temperature of about -250° C., was applied. The question of the retention or otherwise of the disease-producing powers of these bacteria was not investigated, and in this connection much interest attaches to Mr. Swithinbank's investigations on the vitality and virulent properties of that notorious malefactor amongst micro-organisms, the *bacillus tuberculosis*, when exposed to the temperature of liquid air. The specimens of the consumption bacillus employed were originally obtained from the human subject, and they were exposed for periods varying from six hours to six weeks to -190° C. In each case the malignant properties of the tubercle bacillus after exposure were tested by their direct inoculation into animals, and the results compared with those which followed similar inoculations made with bacilli which had not been frozen in this manner, but had been grown in ordinary circumstances. In no single case, Mr. Swithinbank tells us, were these frozen tubercle bacilli deprived of their virulence, and the length of exposure, at any rate as far as could be judged after six weeks, appeared to make no difference in this respect. It is true that the pathogenic action of the frozen bacilli appeared to be somewhat retarded—that is, they took rather longer to kill animals than the ordinary unfrozen bacilli—but in every case their inoculation produced the typical tuberculous lesions associated with them.

Of particular interest, however, in view of what has been already discovered about the lethal effect upon bacteria of violent alternations of temperature, are Mr. Swithinbank's observations on the vitality of the tubercle bacillus when exposed to such extreme variations of temperature as are represented by a passage from -190° C. to that of 15° C.

The *bacillus tuberculosis* is admittedly a tough antagonist to deal with, and enjoys an unenviable notoriety for its robust constitution amongst the pathogenic members of the microbial world, hence a knowledge of its behaviour in these trying circum-

stances, as we now know them to be to bacterial life, becomes of special interest. Great must have been the investigator's satisfaction, then, when he discovered that the vitality of the consumption bacillus had been so seriously impaired by this treatment that its pathogenic properties collapsed, and the animals which were inoculated with these specimens, instead of with the continuously frozen bacilli, suffered no inconvenience, and remained in good health.

But, although no appreciable change either in the structure, vitality, or malignant properties of the particular bacteria investigated have been noted as resulting from their exposure to extremely low temperatures, yet there is no doubt that a certain proportion of the individual micro-organisms present—those probably whose constitution is less robust than their more fortunate associates—do succumb under these trying conditions.

This fact has been well brought out by Dr. Belli, of the University of Padua, in the experiments which he made with the fowl-cholera bacillus, and the anthrax bacillus in the presence of very low temperatures. Thus he exposed a large number of fowl-cholera bacilli in broth to the temperature of liquid air, as many as 396,000 bacilli being present in every twenty drops of the liquid. After exposing them continuously for nine hours to -190°C. , he had the curiosity, after thawing them, to count how many were left alive, and he found that an enormous mortality had taken place amongst them; for, instead of nearly 400,000 bacilli being present in one cubic centimetre, there were only about 9,000. On the other hand, in the broth tubes kept during that time in ordinary surroundings, the bacilli had flourished remarkably, and had greatly increased in numbers. Thus not only had no multiplication amongst these bacilli taken place, which circumstance is always regarded as indicative of their vital condition—not only, then, had their vitality been arrested—but a very large number of them had been actually destroyed in consequence of this severe treatment; but that the residue were not only alive, but unimpaired in their energies on being restored to animation, was proved by their being able to destroy animals, not having parted with any of their malicious propensities. Dr. Belli carried out similar experiments with the bacilli of anthrax and obtained very similar results. With regard to both these varieties of pathogenic bacteria, he mentions that their action upon animals was not quite so rapid as is characteristic of normal specimens of these

micro-organisms, thus confirming the experiments in this direction made with frozen tubercle bacilli.

Not content with this exhibition of their powers of endurance, Dr. Belli determined to make yet another demand upon the vitality of these bacilli. For this purpose he immersed them in the liquid air itself, thus bringing them into direct contact with it, effecting this by lowering into the liquid, strips of filter-paper soaked in broth containing these bacilli. But, in spite of remaining for the space of eight hours in these surroundings, they emerged triumphant, exhibiting no modification whatever either in their structure or pathogenic properties.

There are doubtless many other trials yet awaiting bacteria, to which they will most certainly be submitted before the limits of their powers of endurance have been adequately tested, but it is difficult to conceive of a severer strain upon their vital resources than the imposition of the conditions of which the above is but a brief sketch.

The more intimate becomes our knowledge of bacteria, the more must we marvel at the equipment with which they have been provided for enabling them to maintain themselves in the struggle for existence—a struggle which is as severe and as remorseless in this lowly region as it is in those domains the inhabitants of which have risen to far loftier heights on the great ladder of life.

G. C. FRANKLAND.

Prince Karl.

BY H. C. BAILEY.

CHAPTER I.

A FORAY IN SOLGAU.

IT is almost three hundred years since Gustavus fell dead on Lützen field, and his yellow-coats flung themselves at Wallenstein's squares and died to rescue the king of whose death they did not know; almost three hundred years since the dark February night at Eger when Wallenstein found death from the hands of the men he had honoured and trusted. The fame of these men, and the fame of others like them, still endure, and grow greater as the years go by: no new praise can serve them much and no new blame can harm them. But there were other men who worked through the Thirty Years' War who won no great battles, who laid no country waste, and yet deserve some honour from a later time. You may believe if you choose that little but what is tiresome can come of a story which tells of a man who thought the glory of Wallenstein and Tilly not worth the winning. Yet if you knew Karl of Erbach as I know him you might well sneer because I tell his story ill, but you would not deny that his story was one to be told.

On a May morning long ago Karl, Count of Erbach, stood on the terrace of Solgau Castle looking down into the pool beneath. He dropped a pebble carelessly, and the deep grey water laughed in the sunlight. With his hands on the battlements he stood still watching, and his eyes brightened as he looked. Slowly the water grew smooth and still and dark, and his brows bent. Behind him a girl swept lightly down the terrace, smiled as she saw him, and sat silently on a stone hard by. He stood there, still, tall, and square, a dark bluff figure in the sunlight, insensible of her; she

thought of all those things, and behind the smile on her lips there was a faint pitiful little sigh. But the pity was for him. He broke a tiny piece of stone from the battlements and flung it down again; as the ripples answered his lips curved into a smile that struggled to be a sneer. The Count of Erbach was aware that he was at work on child's play.

'If only I were a fish!' the girl murmured.

Karl, Count of Erbach, turned quickly and his sneer fled.

'I did not know you were here,' said he. The girl swept him a curtsy.

'I ask pardon of the fishes, Count of Erbach,' said she.

'It was not the fishes, Yolande,' Karl said solemnly. There was a pause.

'Oh, why do you always mean just what you say?' cried Yolande.

'But the pool is just like your eyes,' said Karl.

The laugh died on her lips, and a flush crept up her white throat.

'I did not see you, because—why, because I always see you,' said Karl quickly. His eyes were on fire, he caught her hand and his breath came fast. 'Yolande, Yolande, you must know——'

'Ah, no!' she cried, and struggled to free her hand. 'No; you must not say it! What right have you?'

'That is for you to say,' he said slowly. She did not answer. 'My love, my love, you will let me claim it——'

'No, no!' she said, quickly, and sprang away from his arm. 'See! all over Germany men have done things, great things; and who has had a share in them from Solgau?' She paused for a moment, and he stood silent looking away over the woods and the rich meadowland where the cattle were feeding thick. 'And you could, Karl, you could,' she murmured, and she looked up into his face with eyes that said what he wanted most to hear. But he did not look in her eyes, and he spoke slowly, looking still across the countryside.

'There is nothing I have ever done gives me the right,' he said.

'Why? why?' she asked quickly. 'You—you could persuade the Prince to fight—join the Duke of Weimar. You might be a greater than he. You do not try at all. Why, Karl? Will you for—for me?' She laid her hand on his arm.

'I could persuade the Prince to fight. Solgau might join the war,' he said, slowly. 'If I would not do it even for you, Yolande, it is because——'

'Oh, because it is too hard—because it is too dangerous—because—because you would rather be quiet and comfortable and lazy,' she cried.

'That is not why,' he said. He pointed away over the quiet smiling fields: 'That is why. War means shouting and glory and fame and power; yes, and war means Magdeburg too, with the father dead in the doorway and his children tossed from the windows on to pikes.'

She shuddered and looked up into his face with quivering lips. There was nothing new to her in the words, but his voice throbbed as he spoke, and the words rang true. She knew that she must believe him. For one moment she met his eyes, and did not dare look again. Then very gently his arm passed round her and he drew her to him:

'My love, it's little I have ever done——' he said.

'Yolande, Yolande,' cried a gay voice. Running down the terrace came a girl with hair as bright as the sunshine. The lines of her close habit swayed lithely as she came towards them. 'Yolande, Yolande!' she cried again.

Yolande stepped back flushing darkly. Karl turned quickly on his heel and forced a smile.

'Well, will you come, Count?' cried the girl.

'Beyond doubt, your Highness,' said the Count of Erbach.

The Princess Dorothea looked from one to the other:

'Then you have had my message?' she said, looking at Karl from under her eyelashes. He stepped in front of Yolande.

'Your Highness was good enough to bid me come,' said he.

'But I should have asked you to come somewhere, shouldn't I?' said the Princess.

'That was the point at which we had not arrived,' said the Count of Erbach. 'Your Highness's commands were sufficient for me and——'

'So you were not anxious to know what they were?'

The Count of Erbach bowed.

'The command would in any case be obeyed,' said he; and over his shoulder he saw that Yolande had gone.

'In fact, I was explaining to the Lady Yolande the policy of his Highness your father,' he said.

'The policy of the Count of Erbach is most subtle,' said the Princess. But the Count of Erbach did not smile. 'My father has often said so,' she remarked.

'State policy is a most interesting study,' said the Count.

‘Oh—State policy!’ said the Princess. ‘I suppose you could obey me more easily if you knew what to do?’

‘At least more speedily,’ said Karl gravely.

‘Will you give us your escort on a ride to Waldkirch, then?’

‘I am your Highness’s servant.’

Karl strode away down the terrace staring with wide open eyes at the ground. He had learnt much that morning, but he was troubled to guess what his new knowledge meant. The Lady Yolande of Rosenberg would have him play a great part in Germany. Neither then nor afterwards did Karl doubt that he could have played such a part well; and indeed the playing would have been much to his taste. All around him less men than he, as he knew well enough, were carving for themselves name and honour and wealth out of the weak States and the weary people and the ravaged lands of Germany. To meet the rough sneer of a robber captain made prince by his sword arm was well enough before men; when Yolande looked on and her eyes glowed and her cheeks flushed at some brave story of leaguer or foray, it was not too easy to sit silent and find his only reward in the rich fields and happy peasants of Solgau. And now he knew that it was something more than a girl’s idle fancy which made her snatch at every tale of Bernhard of Weimar—ay, even of the Prince von Lichtenstein. As that name passed into his mind his face set and he frowned. Such another as Ludwig von Lichtenstein she would have him be; and six years ago his father was murdered on the Lichtenstein border and the murderers were not found. He could remember his father’s man-at-arms, the gruff rude Scotsman, staggering wounded up at the hall at Erbach clutching at the table to steady himself and crying:

‘Lady, the Count died fighting.’

He saw his mother’s pale face again, saw the sob break in her throat as she rose and fell back into her chair. He remembered the sad little company that came to the castle in the morning with his father’s body in the midst; he remembered the long night when he watched dry-eyed over the two that had loved each other so well in life; he saw the great grey granite cross on the hill at Erbach where her counts and their ladies lie buried.

Of such things the name of Lichtenstein made him think, for his father had been the bitterest enemy of alliance with Lichtenstein. It was on the marches of Lichtenstein that his father was murdered. And after that murder Ludwig, the young swarthy Lichtenstein prince, rode into Solgau seeking alliance now that

the hindrance was gone. Then the new Count of Erbach hurried to Solgau clad all in black, and stood in his father's place by the side of Prince Eberhard.

'By the favour of your Highness,' he said; and he bowed low to Prince Eberhard; but his eyes were on Ludwig, and Ludwig guessed his meaning. He had no love for the Prince von Lichtenstein, but his hate was his own affair, and nought to do with the realm of Solgau; so standing at Prince Eberhard's ear, a strong man by a weak, he kept Solgau peaceful and happy while all around war and the misery of war bit deep into the heart of the land. Now as he walked slowly along the terrace, he knew or he thought he knew that in the eyes of her who was the only judge he admitted on earth—he knew that in her eyes he was wrong. Again and again he asked himself what that knowledge meant to him; he could not drag Solgau to ruin to please a girl, for he bore his father's name. But if she thought him wrong—why if she thought him wrong . . . her eyes were dark and glistening.

When he came to the great gate of the castle they were all mounted and ready, and his eyes went to Yolande as she sat, tall and stately, with her face in dark shadow under a drooping hat.

'And have you been discussing politics again?' cried the Princess.

'No, no, sis,' cried Prince Maximilian. 'Karl has been trying on his green tafeta and his purple velvet——'

'And the rest of your clothes, Max,' said the Count of Erbach.

As they cantered down through the woods, clouds were gathering thick from the southward, but the sun was still bright overhead, and the woods shone with their earliest colours. The Princess glanced back:

'One—two—four grooms! Indeed, Count, you are too careful,' she cried, with a toss of her dainty head.

'That is impossible,' said Karl, with a low bow.

'And do people hate me so much?' she answered pouting.

'There are knaves—even in the lands of the Princess Dorothea.'

'And it would be so dreadful if anything happened to—Yolande,' she cried, looking up at him with a roguish smile.

'Your Highness would of course be grieved.'

Princess Dorothea looked at the big man from head to toe:

'Indeed, I don't know whether it is more tiresome to mean what you say very much or not to mean it at all!' she declared.

'Your Highness has of course done both,' said Karl gravely.

'But it is most tiresome to be treated like a child.'

Karl gave her a long steady look with a touch of sternness.

‘I am most anxious to do that no more,’ said he.

‘And now you are being very serious,’ cried the Princess sadly. Karl shifted uneasily in his saddle.

‘It is my way to think of the serious things,’ he said quietly, ‘and they are tiresome enough. If I talk of them too much I ask pardon of—Dorothea. But sometimes one must speak to—the Princess.’

‘Oh!’ said Dorothea with a sigh, ‘the Princess is a great trial. I always try to forget her.’

‘Then others may do that too,’ said Karl. The girl shivered a little, and looked up at him with tears just coming in her eyes. He looked down into the sweet delicate face. ‘No one will ever forget Dorothea,’ he said and smiled at her.

‘Not if the Count of Erbach makes her a compliment,’ she cried gaily. ‘Is it the very first? Oh, no: the terrace!’

‘I merely expressed my devotion to your Highness.’

‘Oh, to me?’ cried Dorothea.

‘Which is always sincere.’

‘Even then?’ she said, with a sidelong glance, and then suddenly the smile flitted away from her face. ‘You must forgive me. I talk without thinking.’ He sat silent.

‘And I often think without talking,’ said he; ‘for which most people are grateful.’

‘Indeed you can talk very nicely,’ the Princess declared.

‘Few would believe it, even on the word of a Princess.’ Suddenly he stood up in his stirrups. The smile died out of his face and he peered forward through the sunlight with his hands shading his eyes. He shouted to two of the grooms and they spurred quickly forward. They had come almost through the wood, and below them lay a gentle furrowed slope of cornland and meadow. The Prince and Yolande had stopped, and they too were looking at a grey cloud of smoke that rose from a farmstead not far away. Through the smoke they could see men and horses moving quickly and they heard hoarse cries borne up the wind.

Max turned as Karl rode up.

‘And this, most noble, would seem to be a foray into the very peaceful land of Solgau,’ said he with a smile. ‘Oh, Karl, you councillor of peace——!’

‘Keep back in the trees with the women!’ said Karl sharply.

The two grooms were half way down the hill already. The horsemen at the farm saw them and gathered together; then, as

a groom turned and shouted to Karl, they galloped away southwards, towards the land of Hornberg. Karl rode after his grooms, cantering down the hill till they came together to the burning house. The ricks were alight, and the poor rough household goods scattered about the trampled flower-beds. At the farmyard gate lay a man bleeding from many wounds, and by him knelt a woman sobbing and kissing his pale lips. Her dress was all awry, and she cowered and shuddered as Karl and his men drew up. Karl's Scotch man-at-arms growled out an oath and trotted round the house; the other sat stolidly watching as Karl sprang down. He knelt on one knee by the woman's side, put his hand on her head, and :

'My poor lass, who was it?' he said. She looked up at him fearfully with big wild eyes.

'Pappenheimers! Pappenheimers!' she shrieked, and then she fell across the dead body and hugged it to her. 'My man, my man!' she sobbed. Her eyes were dry.

For a moment Karl stayed watching her, then he rode with a white frowning face to find Max and the two girls watching him.

'Go back,' he said sharply. 'There may be danger yet.' They did not move.

'You were the man,' said Max pointing at Karl with his whip, 'you were the man who would have no talk of war, no thought of alliance—oh, a champion of peace!' He had, just then, an excuse for forgetting that war meant such things everywhere. And another, who might have known better, cried :

'The Count of Erbach loves quiet!' And Yolande's lip curled and her eyes flashed at the man who was wiser than she. She sprang from her horse and ran to the woman who lay sobbing in the mire. Yolande put an arm round her, and the woman shrank at the touch; but then she looked up and saw Yolande's face, and she came eagerly to her bosom and cried at last.

From Waldkirch a crowd of shouting ill-armed country folk had hurried, and they busied themselves with the burning house. The Scotchman came back to Karl.

'Stock almost all left, sir,' said he. Karl did not answer; and the man took command of the villagers, working as if the house were his own. The dead body was covered and borne away, and the woman who could not leave it, and yet could not leave Yolande, walked slowly and unsteadily within the clasp of Yolande's arm. At last Karl called his Scotchman :

'Jock, did you see them?' said he.

'Ay, sir. Pappenheim's colours : Pappenheim's coats. But—
humph——!'

'What then?'

'No Pappenheimer ever left a pig behind!'

Karl stood biting his lip, looking away southward. At last :

'Go, tell the Lady Yolande I will bring her an escort from Solgau,' said he.

'So these be the fruits of peace and quietness, Karl,' said Max at his elbow. 'And, faith, I believe Yolande thinks with me.' Karl turned on him sharply.

'Where is your sister?'

'Oh, back in the wood. She doesn't love blood—except in a tale.'

'The Lady Yolande, sir—umph, the Lady Yolande, sir, desires no escort from the Count of Erbach,' said the Scotchman, backing his horse.

'Ho, ho, Karl; fair and full!' cried Max. 'Here's someone you'll listen to.' And the Count of Erbach muttered an oath.

Clouds had gathered thickly, and the whole sky was overcast. Gloomy and silent, Karl rode back through the wood, sometimes answering, sometimes scarcely hearing, his companions.

'Well, you might let us have an alliance with Lichtenstein,' Max said peevishly. 'That would save the border from this.'

'Ah,' said Karl indifferently. He did not take his policy from Prince Maximilian—not even from Yolande.

It was nearing sundown when they came to the castle again, and suddenly away in the west the cloud drifts parted, a ray of silver light shot from under a heavy blue cloud, and shone down on the gilded vane of Rosenberg Castle. The light flashed back over meadow and woodland, and Karl saw it at Solgau and scarcely heeded it then.

CHAPTER II.

THE GUESTS OF LUDWIG VON LICHTENSTEIN.

'YES, yes, Karl; like father like son : *O patre duro fili durior*—you read your Flaccus still? A great writer, Karl, a very great writer; one of those who—*justum et tenacem propositi virum*—my own case, Karl. You shall not shake me from my purpose. It is seldom I maintain a point strenuously; and it becomes me to confess that frequently I have known your opinions to be just.

But yes, yes, Karl—*o patre duro*—sterner son of a stern father—my mind is made up. If I were always to yield; why, if I were always to yield—if I were——’ the sentence of his Highness the Prince Eberhard expired with a mutter.

‘Your Highness is resolved to go?’ said the Count of Erbach, quietly.

‘Assuredly, Karl. It is not often—seldom, indeed,’ said Prince Eberhard solemnly, ‘seldom that I maintain a—ahem! Yes, Karl. There are moments in the history of a realm when it is not only necessary, but—er, but becoming that the pilot—does not the old Greek call kings pilots?—should—should—should—and this is one, Karl, this is one.’

‘It is beyond doubt for your Highness to decide whether you will visit Lichtenstein or stay at home,’ said the Count of Erbach.

‘Precisely, Karl. This is—er—one—one. This is one,’ Prince Eberhard repeated, and Karl withdrew with a bow.

Long years afterwards, when Karl of Erbach looked back on his early years at Solgau, he found, perhaps, like other men, a good deal to regret and some little cause to repent of this or that; but oftenest among these things he thought of the time when the grave on Erbach hill had kept him from eating the bread of the Prince von Lichtenstein. But if his life were to live again, he would do as he did then—for he stayed at Solgau.

On the way from Solgau to Lichtenstein, and within the Lichtenstein borders, a strange thing befell the company of Prince Eberhard. From out of a copse a troop of Pappenheim’s riders swept down upon them with loud yells and firings of pistols and brandishings of swords; and Prince Eberhard’s company, who were in no wise ready for fighting, huddled and hustled together, like sheep before a dog. The Princess Dorothea was cut off from the rest in the first wild rush, and one rough trooper caught at her rein, and another had his arm round her. She cried to her brother, who struggled to find his pistols. Never were men so unready as the men Prince Eberhard led. In front, on the hill-top, a bugle blew clear and shrill, and racing down the hill came the Lichtenstein cuirassiers, with Prince Ludwig himself at their head. The Pappenheimers did not wait to stand the charge. One of them snatched a kiss from Dorothea, and rode off with a hoarse laugh. Prince Ludwig dashed up to her, threw his horse on its haunches.

‘Your Highness is unhurt?’ he cried.

Between her tears, ‘No, no; he did not hurt me,’ she sobbed.

'The cursed ruffian!' said Prince Ludwig angrily. Dorothea gave a little gasping laugh.

'Why? Because he didn't?' she asked.

'I would have given half my kingdom that this should never have been,' cried the Prince. 'And yet—I am happy to have been able to do even so little as this for your Highness.' His glance spoke admiration, and even more; but the Princess was young, and she lifted her innocent eyes to his.

'But indeed it was not a little,' she said, and blushed.

'I have to offer my gratitude to your Highness for—for——' quoth Prince Eberhard, with an indistinct gesture to end his sentence. Ludwig bowed low.

'I am distressed that there should have been need,' said he. 'May I assure your Highness of a sufficient escort now?' And in high contentment Prince Eberhard moved on to the castle of Lichtenstein. More than once Dorothea's eyes sought Ludwig, as he rode jauntily along, with a word ever ready to patch her father's sentences and a glance for her that brought the blood to her cheeks.

Now all this while, behind a clump of trees on a hill to the northward, another troop had halted that rode in array other than Prince Eberhard's. In front and flank and rear of the main body men rode alone, watching carefully all around, and early they caught a glint of steel from the copse whence the Pappenheimers came. A halt was called, and two men, gay in velvet and lace, came forward to see.

'A most charming ambush—eh, Lormont? But scarcely in our path. Ah! I see; for our friends from Solgau. Now who lies in wait for our very dear friends from Solgau?' His companion yawned.

'If you were more lazy, Turenne, or I were less, we should be happier,' said he. 'I decline to consider your very dear friends from Solgau—a barbarous name!'

Turenne laughed.

'My dear—— Ah! the actors increase. Now, it is very foolish to sit on a grey horse on a hill.'

'And in the sun,' said Lormont.

The Pappenheimers charged.

'Our friends from Solgau appear distressed.'

'Must we charge all that way to assist your charming friends from—er—S.?'

'Ah! our grey horse waits for the ambush to discover itself!

He sounds a bugle! And—and a whole regiment charges! A most interesting and edifying spectacle!’

‘They will become very hot,’ said Lormont.

‘A very charming play!’ said Turenne. ‘The ambush has run away; the cuirassiers are too lazy to run after it; everyone is safe, and His Most Exalted Highness the Prince von Lichtenstein is receiving the reward of valour. Now, I wonder how those cuirassiers came to be here, Lormont?’

‘I am distressed to hear it,’ drawled Lormont. ‘You will insist on my wondering too, and that is most fatiguing.’

‘Ludwig von Lichtenstein is—is he perhaps a dramatist? Lormont, you have seen a most romantic comedy!’

‘Your dear friend Ludwig has been anticipated in his vocation,’ said Lormont.

‘But not surpassed, Lormont.’

‘Ah, we mean different things; we always do. I mean—the other devil existed first.’ Lormont flicked a speck of dust from his laced jacket and yawned delicately.

‘You know him?’ Turenne asked quickly.

‘God forbid!’ murmured Lormont. ‘His eyes are green—ugh! green, my dear Henri, like that distressing cloak of yours. Shall we talk of something pleasant?’

The sun had scarcely set when Prince Eberhard and his host came to Lichtenstein Castle, but already the windows were ablaze with light, and men clad in the yellow and black of Lichtenstein stood, flaming torches in hand, in a long row across the courtyard. Trumpets roared a welcome as Prince Eberhard rode slowly over the drawbridge, and Ludwig von Lichtenstein wheeled his horse round in the courtyard and bowed to his very saddle.

‘I welcome the House of Solgau,’ he cried. ‘May this day be in your memory as in mine.’

‘Our memory, your Highness, must, of course, be tinged with—er——’ quoth Prince Eberhard, and committed his sentence to a wave of the hand. So if Prince Ludwig smiled for a moment, he had a reason.

The hall of audience at Lichtenstein was gay with jewels and bright dresses; there were many of the nobles of Lichtenstein come to do honour to the Prince of Solgau. Prince Ludwig moved quickly here and there among the crowd, leaving a laugh behind him with the men, with gay looks following him from the women. By her father sat the Princess Dorothea, and the eyes of many men sought her lovely face and dwelt on its dainty

curves that were still flushed by the breeze. The Princess Dorothea was very happy; she had had a charming adventure, and before her was a very pretty show, and Ludwig von Lichtenstein had looked at her once—twice—oh! she had given up counting. The trumpets blew loudly again; a loud voice cried in the doorway:

‘The Envoy of his Majesty the Most Christian King!’

Prince Ludwig passed quickly to the door at the end of the hall. The talking and laughing died away, and there was a long silent pause. Then up through the middle of the gay courtier crowd, walking slowly, with his eyes on the ground, came a tall, bent figure clad in a friar’s rough gown. Behind followed his suite blazing with jewels and gold, throwing arch smiling glances at the ladies of Lichtenstein. But their leader seemed to see nothing. He bowed low to Ludwig:

‘I am happy to greet your Highness,’ said he, and Ludwig bowed solemnly in answer. ‘I had scarcely hoped your Highness would have returned. It was said you were—on the marches of Solgau,’ and from under his heavy eyebrows he set his eyes on Ludwig.

‘Rumour ever lies, my dear father,’ said Ludwig airily.

‘Sometimes at least,’ said the monk. ‘But I had heard of forays on which I knew your Highness must attend.’ Ludwig looked at him sharply, and the monk dropped his eyes at once: ‘It is well that rumour did not know the truth,’ said he.

Behind him Lormont yawned vastly in the shadow of a jewelled finger.

‘Our most holy father grows strangely tedious, Turenne,’ he murmured. ‘Eh? my dear friend, you sleep too heavily—oh! Venus the well-beloved! What way is this to eye a girl?’

Turenne was looking, like more than one man, at the Princess Dorothea; and his cold keen eyes kindled as he looked. He did not answer Lormont, and Lormont sighed gently and yawned again.

The Prince von Lichtenstein gave his guests a banquet in the great hall, and Solgau and Lichtenstein drank to each other, drank in all sincerity, and drank deep. There were many gay all down the long tables, and Prince Ludwig the gayest of all. It was the first time for many years, he cried, that a Prince of Solgau had come to the hall of Lichtenstein. And Prince Ludwig prayed to his God that it might not be the last.

‘Such prayers must surely be heard,’ said the monk gravely.

Prince Ludwig half turned in his seat.

'I give you the health of our ally,' he cried. 'To the welfare and glory of the Most Christian King!' and even the men of Solgau who were no man's allies sprang to their feet and drank. The laughing cries sank to silence, and from the high table rose Père Joseph, the Envoy of France, drawing his dull brown frock about him.

'If I had not known before how much my master was loved in Lichtenstein and Solgau, I should have learnt to-night,' said he gravely. 'For your affection and your cheers I thank you as he would, and in his name I drink—to the honour and faith of Prince Ludwig von Lichtenstein'; and very solemnly he drank his toast.

Prince Ludwig rose from the table early to lead the dance in the audience hall.

'Your Highness will grant excuse to my gown?' said Père Joseph quietly, and turned away. He looked round his suite.

'The Vicomte de Turenne is at play, sir,' Lormont said coolly.

'Then I will trouble you, Lormont.'

'I am truly honoured,' murmured Lormont.

As they passed along the corridors Lormont lagged behind a moment and whispered to two of the escort. When they passed into Père Joseph's room the two stood on guard without.

'You are at pains to be careful, Lormont,' said Père Joseph.

'It is probably less trouble, sir, in the castle of Lichtenstein.'

The Capuchin sat down, and was silent for a moment while his fingers drummed on the table. He looked keenly at Lormont:

'You do not trust the Prince von Lichtenstein?'

'Who, I, sir?' drawled Lormont. 'I would trust the Prince von Lichtenstein with—his own honour.'

'Ah!' said the Capuchin slowly, and there was silence again while Lormont played with his ruffles. 'Pappenheimers on the Solgau border, Pappenheimers ten miles from Lichtenstein; how do Pappenheim's men come here?'

'On the very day that the Prince of Solgau comes to Lichtenstein!' Lormont drawled. The Capuchin looked at him long and steadily.

'You think something, Lormont?'

'I fear I do, sir,' said Lormont, and he sighed. It seemed that he would have to explain. 'God in His providence seems to me to have sent them to frighten Prince Eberhard into alliance with Lichtenstein.' He paused. 'God,' he added thoughtfully, 'is great.' The Capuchin frowned. 'So he put them into Pappenheim's coats,' said Lormont, and yawned.

'And yet—if it bring us alliance with Solgau,' said the Capuchin slowly. His dull eyes flashed. 'Perhaps—perhaps I dare try a fall with Prince Ludwig von Lichtenstein.'

'Doubtless, sir; you might drive a hard bargain with the devil in hell,' drawled Lormont. He brushed his eyebrow with one finger. 'And we are at Lichtenstein,' said he.

For some minutes the Capuchin sat silent; then he rose, unlocked a box of despatches and handed some to Lormont.

'Read,' he said; he laid parchment on the table and took a pen in his hand; but for a long while he wrote nothing.

The dance began merrily; and when the music stopped for a moment Prince Ludwig led Dorothea away. She was flushed and breathless from the dance. He held up a curtain.

'Dare you face the terrace?' said he. She smiled an answer. It was a warm night in early June; on the dark terrace they heard the music only faintly through the ripple of the deep water below. In the gloomy depths of the river the stars were mirrored fitfully as the water rolled by in tiny waves.

'Your Highness has given me the happiest day of my life,' said Ludwig softly.

'Indeed, I liked the dance too,' Dorothea answered very quickly. Her heart was beating very fast, and she dared not think of what he would answer.

'The dance? Yes,' said he. 'It was much to feel your hand in mine, but more, far more, to know that I saved you this afternoon. Ah, Dorothea, can you guess how I loved to do that?'

'It—it was very brave,' said Dorothea, with a catch in her breath. She wavered a little in her walk and his arm stole round her. 'Indeed, I thank you, Prince Ludwig,' she said like a child. Ludwig drew her closer to him and took her trembling hand in his long thin fingers.

'Princess, my princess, it is not your thanks I want,' he said softly. Her head rested on his shoulder, and she felt his breath on her cheek. 'I want your love,' he whispered. She lay quivering in his arms, and could not speak. 'Your love, Dorothea, your love,' he said again with passion ringing in his voice. His grasp grew stronger.

'Yes,' she murmured, 'yes,' and felt her face hot as fire.

Her breast throbbed under his hand, and as he pressed his hot lips to hers, for one moment Ludwig von Lichtenstein forgot even himself.

(To be continued.)

At the Sign of the Ship.

SINCE the affair of the Diamond Necklace, which ruined Marie Antoinette, there has been no such colossal hoax as the Humbert Swindle, and the will of the late mythical Mr. Crawford. In the business of the Necklace there was only one dupe, Cardinal Rohan, and he was, perhaps, in love with the Queen, and certainly was the gull, in other matters, of the egregious Cagliostro. Even so, the world found it hard to believe, and it *is* hard to believe, that the Cardinal could really be taken in by the appearance of the girl who personated the Queen, and by the Queen's forged letters—signed with a signature which she never used. But the ambition, if not the passion, of the Cardinal made him anxious to believe in the incredible, and he succeeded. But in the Humbert case the victims are hard-headed men of business, with no ambition beyond doing a stroke in affairs, and probably they were not in love with the lady who gulled them. Yet they advanced monstrous sums of money on no security but that of a romance—an empty safe, and the outsides of envelopes. The conception of the rival claimants—persons non-existent but very litigious—was happy and beautifully simple: novelists must wring their hands when they reflect that *they* never thought of it. Yet we ask ourselves, could a man have done this great *coup*, or, as in the Necklace affair, did it need a woman? Perhaps it was the petticoat that wrought such ruin among the financiers of a nation proverbially gallant.

* . *

In England, one fancies, the romance would not have been triumphant. Our credulity is rather the credulity of the crowd than of the individual. The Popish Plot succeeded because for a hundred years Protestant England had been expecting a Bartholomew day; her nerves had not recovered from the Gunpowder Plot—she was in a twitter. And then there really *was* a Popish plot, the King's plot, in the secret articles of the Treaty of Dover. Charles II. probably never meant to carry that plot out; he only

wanted money. But a plot there was, and everybody knew that the Merry Monarch was not to be trusted. Hence the national nervousness, excited to fury for their own ends by the Whigs. The public could believe anything, including Lucy Waters's marriage lines in the Black Box, which was as mythical, so far as its contents went, as the famous iron safe of Madame Humbert. *Populus vult decipi*: the Popish Plot of Oates was the 'suggested hallucination' of a nervous crowd. But Madame Humbert worked, not on a nervous crowd, nor on an amorous Cardinal, but on financiers: therein lies her merit.

* . *

The Dreyfus affair was, like the Popish Plot, an infatuation of a crowd. Military secrets were being sold; as the poet says,

This kind of thing
Is always going on.

The Semitic race was unpopular; politicians took hold of a Hebrew, the Captain, just as, in England, they invented the Warming Pan myth. The public, in matters political, believes just what it wants to believe, whether the public is patriotic or anti-patriotic. There is no use in reasoning with the public when it wants to believe in anything, from a Popish plot to the guilt or innocence of Captain Dreyfus. The public will not be content to suspend 'what the poverty of the English language compels me to call' its judgment. When I was an undergraduate, the row about Governor Eyre and Jamaica was going on. The late Master of Balliol, Mr. Jowett, my tutor, asked me what was my valuable view. I said that I had no view. There was a great mass of conflicting evidence. I was reading for the schools; I had not got up the Eyre case. The affair of Sphacteria or the conduct of Themistocles interested me more deeply. But the Master did not approve of this line, so creditable, I still think, to my early sagacity. I remark that an old Presbyterian historian of about 1630 also rebukes the large minority of his countrymen who would not take a side where they had not evidence enough. Every man should take a side, he thought, like Solon. But how could I take a side? Governor Eyre had saved a colony; *or*, he was a person compared with whom Nero was a Howard or a Miss Fry. The most famous people were of opposite minds: I think Mr. Carlyle was on one side, Mr. Frederic Harrison and Mr. John Stuart Mill on the other. Why excite oneself on a subject where the dry light of scientific certainty was not to be obtained?

* . *

Next to the Humbert case, the frauds by Vrain Lucas on M. Chasles (1868-1869) seem the most incredible. M. Chasles was a mathematician in the first rank, but he was also a patriot of the most demoniac sort, and sank so low as to be an autograph collector. The patriot wished to prove that Pascal anticipated Newton's theory about why an over-ripe apple falls off (as the Ettrick Shepherd said, 'it falls because there is nothing to keep it up'), and the autograph collector proved his case by producing forged letters by Pascal to Newton, then a boy of eleven. He did not forge them himself; they were sold to him by the forger, Vrain Lucas. But foreign patriots can believe what they like, as long as it is to the discredit of this country. This, indeed, is their chief occupation. It would have been discreditable to this country if Newton had cribbed from, or been forestalled by, a Frenchman. So M. Chasles believed in forged autographs refuted by every circumstance of dates and of handwriting; he believed with all the vigour and all the invincible ignorance of a disciple of Mrs. Gallup. Mr. Whibley, in the *Cornhill*, says that 'M. Fougère' resisted the delusion; I have grounds for thinking that Mr. Whibley really wrote M. (Prosper) Faugère. But one of M. Faugère's arguments, turned on a mention, by the forged Pascal, of coffee. Now coffee did not come into France, said M. Faugère, till 1669, long after the date of the sham letter. I can only say that Mr. Pepys constantly mentions coffee in England as early as 1661, and surely France possessed the bean as early as we did.

* * *

Mr. Samuel Davey, in his 'Guide to the Collector,' does not say that the French Academy of Sciences was hoaxed by the sham Pascal letters. Mr. Whibley says that the Academy (of *Sciences* only) in 1869 declared M. Chasles to have proved his point. I suppose this is entirely correct (Mr. Whibley could not state it were it not so), but no Academy of Letters out of Bedlam could have been deceived by the gross palpable forgeries. But scientific characters are a great deal more easily gulled in literary questions. Vrain Lucas said that he had forged for patriotic reasons. I daresay he dragged *ma mère* into his defence, but the jury would not have it. He got two years—'hard,' I hope. M. Chasles held a medal of our Royal Society as a mathematician,

And was always thought
A superior person.

But he was best as a mathematician, and bought autographs, in French, of Jeanne d'Arc, who could not write, and of Judas

Iscariot. Thus a person in one respect idiotic may be an excellent mathematician and a dupe of the first water. He accepted an autograph of 'Lazarus le ressuscité,' on *paper*, and in French. I daresay he did not know that Greek and Aramaic ever existed. Lazarus spoke favourably of *la belle France*, and M. Chasles was his victim, as Bozzy was of Ireland's Shakspeare forgeries, and as moderns less ingenious are of impostors quite as daring.

* * *

The historical novel owes a certain decent regard to actual History. The great writers can take liberties. Thackeray makes the Duke of Hamilton anxious to commit bigamy with Beatrice Esmond, for the Duke was, in fact, a married man when he died—engaged to the fairest of her sex. Scott knowingly resuscitates the dead Amy Robsart, and deranges the dates of Shakspeare's life in *Kenilworth*. But while we pardon these excesses, we really cannot pardon, I think, the pyramidal absurdities in fact and in style exhibited by Mr. Charles Major in *Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall*.¹ The hero, Malcolm François de Lorraine Vernon (a probable name!), is the narrator, of course. He has been 'Esquire in waiting to his Grace of Guise,' and has been jilted by Mary Stuart (aged fourteen), who marries 'a simpering fool, Francis II.,' instead of espousing Master Malcolm. So, in the autumn of 1567, we find Malcolm in Dundee, 'brooding over Mary's disgraceful liaison with Bothwell.' Hearing that Moray is to be made Regent next day, Malcolm runs away, incidentally killing six men. Why does he run away? Why does he not sail away, as he easily might? He flies because he has just heard that the Queen is captured (June 15, 1567), and that Moray is to be made Regent 'to-morrow' (in August 1567). The two events did not follow each other quite so closely. So Malcolm runs off to Haddon Hall to marry Dorothy Vernon, who (Mary being out of the question) will do as well as another.

* * *

Following these felicitous inventions, we are introduced to a plot 'formed among Mary's friends in Scotland to rescue her from Loch Leven Castle, . . . and bring her incognito (*sic*) to'—where does the reader guess? Whither would the Seatons and Hamiltons be likely to bring Mary? Why, 'to Rutland'! Hence she could 'escape to France' (the Rutlandshire harbours being convenient) 'or make her peace with Elizabeth'! 'The adven-

¹ Macmillans.

ture was full of peril'—I quite agree. No friends of Mary's would have allowed her to cross to Workington, if they could have stayed her. The idea also was to place Mary on the throne of Queen Bess, but we can easily believe that 'the Rutlands knew nothing of this sub-plot.' So a character named John Manners 'went to Rutland with the purpose of being in readiness to meet Mary on the Scottish border.' He might almost as wisely have gone to Jericho. Now Dorothy had a *penchant* for this John, which led her to call Queen Mary (whom John might have a liking for) 'a Scottish mongrel.' Exquisite maiden, Dorothy!

* * *

Queen Elizabeth being at Haddon Hall, our author says, with simplicity and brevity, 'John returned to Rutland with Queen Mary.' He might as well say that John returned to Yokohama. The American novel-reader is of a confiding and generous nature; but she will decline to believe that Mary, having escaped from Loch Leven, took John's arm and trotted off with him to Rutland. The novel-reader has heard of Langside, Workington, Carlisle, Bolton, a sequence of prisons. However, Mary dodged Sir Francis Knollys, and came comfortably to Rutland with John. Then Dorothy was infuriated, and screamed, 'God's curse on the white huzzy'—that is, Mary Queen of Scots. She sped to tell Elizabeth where Mary was: 'Ah, the Duke of Rutland and his son John,' said Elizabeth. 'Send for my Lord Cecil!'

* * *

Now, there was no 'Duke of Rutland,' as Mr. Major is intermittently aware, and there was no 'Lord Cecil.' Mr. Major knows no more about the nobles and statesmen of 1567 than Mrs. Gallup's Bacon knew. Dorothy, too, speaks of 'Lord Cecil.' Dorothy betrays Queen Mary, as we see, but Queen Mary reminds the hero that she was only fourteen when she jilted him; though, to be sure, as a young widow she threw him over again—for Darnley! Did ever fabulist string so many absurdities together? As to the style, Master Malcolm writes about 'the happenings in Haddon Hall.' Happenings! Mr. Major's false history is not always ignorance, of course—he frankly states some of his perversions; in the strict sense of the word it is impertinence. No mortal has a right to pervert the most notorious facts in history, for example, by bringing the Queen straight from Loch Leven to Rutland. The idea of the story is, in itself, a feasible idea. A jealous girl, suspecting that her lover may be one of Mary's

unfortunate admirers, betrays the Queen without observing that she is also endangering her own lover. But all this could have been arranged when Mary was at Tutbury, or Bolton, or in England where you please, without the colossal *niaiserie* of making John Manners carry Mary from Loch Leven to Rutland. Novelists may take liberties in arranging facts which are hardly known at all to the general reader. This allows them rather a large field. But as the main incidents of the Queen's life are familiar—from novels—to novel-readers, the crude distortions compiled by Mr. Major are likely to rouse the incredulous scorn even of novel-reading school-girls. When Queen Elizabeth is represented as tenderly interested in the love affair of any other woman, school-girls know how much that is in keeping with her Majesty's amiable character. That Malcolm should be represented as thinking himself a possible husband for the Queen, before she was Dauphine, or while she was the Dowager of France and not yet the bride of Darnley, is an anachronism quite startling. But the idea, too crazy for Chastelard, may not seem insane to the readers of this kind of historical romance. It is not creditable to literature, or to that noble art of Scott, Thackeray, and Dumas—an art which demands knowledge no less than invention. As to smoking tobacco in 1566, Mr. Major makes his hero assert the use of it in England at that date, deliberately, I know not on what authority; but as his hero, in the same sentence, talks of 'my Lord Raleigh,' his evidence does not look robust. That coffee was introduced to England in 1573 also rather disconcerts one, but Mr. Major may have consulted 'the encyclopædias,' and, as we have seen, M. Faugère was probably wrong as to the late date of coffee in France. It is never mentioned by Molière, I think (under correction), but Shakspeare never mentions tobacco, with which he was necessarily familiar.

* * *

Mr. Stringer Bateman has sent me a pamphlet on 'God save the King,' with suggestions for abolishing, or amending, or substituting other words for those with which we are familiar. These questions do not interest me, they may 'make a kirk or a mill' of the National Anthem; but loyal persons will cleave to

Confound their politics,

whatever changes are made. The thing is old enough to have had both Jacobite and Whig versions in 1745. One (Whig)

prays that Marshal Wade 'may like a torrent rush, Rebellious Scots to crush.' Poor Marshal Wade! He did not 'rush' anywhere: he crawled out of Newcastle to meet the Prince, stuck in the mud, and crept feebly back again. He was old, and had he met the clans they would have used him as they did Cope and Hawley.

*George is glorious,
Reign meritorious!*

says another Whig of 1745. He was easily pleased. Mr. Bateman thinks that the song, in one shape or another, dates from the Great Rebellion. One is only certain that it was used by both parties, in the eighteenth century, whether they favoured James or George. It is a good noisy, outspoken thing, with no literary airs and graces.

* . *

The sailor who, after hearing a Good Friday sermon, knocked down the first Jew he met, remarked that he heard of the circumstances of the anniversary for the first time. In the same way the oldest stories are new, to those who have never heard them before. In this magazine, for May, I darkly hinted at a story about the rather recent discovery of Queen Mary's Casket Letters, and about their loss or destruction through the ignorance of the finders. I heard the tale orally, and, as told to me, it was an excellent yarn. But in Dundee, the story, according to the *Dundee Advertiser*, 'is a rusty and somewhat worm-eaten joke.' We cannot all be dwellers in Dundee; what is stale in that centre of culture may be unheard of at St. Andrews. However, the tale as given by the *Dundee Advertiser* is *not* the tale as it was told to me. As printed in the newspaper it contradicts well-known historical facts, and could interest nobody who knows anything. But, as I heard the yarn, it was well and carefully composed, though, of course, it needed evidence, and recent evidence proves it incorrect. The legend, I know, had reached historical students in France.

* . *

Mr. Sidney Low, in the *Cornhill* for June, explores my old problem: Why is so much poetry written, and why is so little of it read? Mr. Low suggests that music has the upper hand; and so it has. Music is a popular art; modern poetry of to-day is not. But music has always been more popular than poetry, ever since English verse and English music were divorced. Words for songs

now are trash, or in foreign tongues, or are so sung that you no more hear the sense of them than you pick up the meaning of Latin prayers when chanted. Moreover, music and poetry are as antagonistic as mathematics, or science, and the classics. There are indeed 'double firsts,' happy people who can take pleasure both in music and poetry. Mr. Browning was one; Mr. Bridges is another. But, as a rule, poets and lovers of poetry rather hate music than otherwise, and lovers of music are indifferent to poetry. 'Music is the most expensive of noises,' said Théophile Gautier: Dr. Johnson could not abide it; Scott liked a 'lilt,' an oratorio would have sent him to sleep; and though Shelley wrote charmingly about music, he had no turn for that art. The people to whom scientific music appeals vastly exceed in number those who care for verse. They pay for seats at concerts; they grudge the same price for a book of the verse of to-day. There is no competition in their minds. They want music; poetry, of to-day, they do not want, except that of Mr. Phillips and Mr. Kipling. We pipe unto them (not that I personally pipe any longer), but they do not pay for our sweet pipings.

* * *

Why not? Because, I fear, *the piping is not good enough!* Even if it were good, not many people care for poetry; if they do care, they have an inexhaustible body of the poetry of the past.

"Dead men outsing and outlove us."

That is the truth.

ANDREW LANG.

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